Kentucky
Accelerating Learning Statewide
through an Advanced Rating System
All STARS

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

*The State must meet the following requirements to be eligible to compete for funding under this program:*

The State has not previously received an RTT-ELC grant.

The Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement that the State must attach to its application, describing the Participating State Agency's level of participation in the grant. (See section XIII.) At a minimum, the MOU or other binding agreement must include an assurance that the Participating State Agency agrees to use, to the extent applicable--

(1) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
(2) A set of statewide Program Standards;
(3) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
(4) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

List of Participating State Agencies:
*The applicant should list below all Participating State Agencies that administer public funds related to early learning and development, including at a minimum: the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of CCDF, the section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA programs, State-funded preschool, home visiting, Title I of ESEA, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, and the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, as well as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, the State's Child Care Licensing Agency, and the State Education Agency.*

*For each Participating State Agency, the applicant should provide a cross-reference to the place within the application where the MOU or other binding agreement can be found. Insert additional rows if necessary. The Departments will determine eligibility.*

| **Participating State Agency Name (Indicate the Lead Agency)** | MOU Location in Application | **Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency** |
|---|---|---|
| **Governor's Office of Early Childhood** | Appendix | Provides support, monitoring and funding for Community Early Childhood Programs<br><br>Includes the Head Start Collaboration Office<br><br>Coordinates the scholarship program<br><br>Maintains relationships with and coordinates the network of Professional Development Counselors<br><br>Partners with Institutes of Higher Education on professional development programs<br>Provides staff support to the Early |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Governor's Office of Early Childhood (continued)** | | Childhood Advisory Council<br><br>Recommends investment of 25% of the Tobacco Settlement Funds in early childhood programs |
| **Cabinet for Health and Family Services**<br><br>Dept for Community Based Services<br><br>Department for Public Health<br><br>Department for Family Resource Centers and Volunteer Services<br><br>Office of Inspector General<br><br>Department for Medicaid Services<br><br>Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs | Appendix | <br><br>Child Care Development Fund and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families<br><br>HANDS home visitation program; IDEA Part C; Women, Infants and Children; prenatal and well-child services; newborn screening program, Title V Maternal and Child Block Grant<br><br>Family Resource and Youth Service Centers<br><br>Licensing of Type I and II child care centers<br><br>KY Medicaid Program and KY Children's Health Insurance Program<br><br>Program providing specialized care for children with certain physical conditions |
| **Kentucky Department of Education** | Appendix | State Education Agency<br><br>State funded pre-school<br><br>Section 619, IDEA Part B<br><br>Title I of ESEA |
| **Education and Workforce Development Cabinet** | Appendix | Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |

There must be an active Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program in the State, either through the State under section 511(c) of Title V of the Social Security Act, as added by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111-148), or through an eligible non-profit organization under section 511(h)(2)(B).

*The State certifies that it has an active MIECHV program in the State, either through the State or through an eligible non-profit organization. The Departments will determine eligibility.*

☒ Yes
☐ No

# Section A
# Successful State Systems

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## Overview: All young children ready to learn, ready to grow, ready to succeed

It's Monday. Connie Johnson wakes to the alarm. It's 5:15 a.m. It's another day. She rolls out of bed, starts the coffee, jumps in the shower. By 5:45, she is waking 4-year-old Maya and 2-year-old Knox, helping them into their "school" clothes, rounding up shoes and socks, debating over a hair bow, and wrestling the little one into a dry set of briefs. All the while, she is watching the clock: she must have everyone out the door by 6:20 if she is to clock in at work by 7:00. A quick breakfast is followed by face washing, teeth brushing, and one last trip to the potty. No bow today; no time.

In the car, Connie chugs her coffee and listens as Maya sings something from Sesame Street, though Connie can't really recall which episode or character. On auto-pilot, Connie turns on the radio, making sure the music is directed to the front. In 15 minutes, they arrive at Anita Beckham's house, needing only a few "stop that's" and "not nows" during this morning's commute. Connie parks the car, unloads the kids and their day bags, and walks Knox and Maya purposefully to the door and inside. "Y'all be good for Miss Anita today," she shouts as she turns back toward her car. She sinks into the seat, turns the radio up, and directs her thoughts to her job at the 100-bed hospital, where she works as a Certified Nurse Assistant. It isn't the first time she is grateful for Miss Anita and the little home-based daycare – a safe, clean, affordable place for Maya and Knox that is right on her way to work.

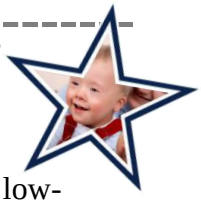
Between socks and potty training and just trying to make it from paycheck to paycheck, it is not surprising that Connie's mind never turns to the quality of the learning environment at Miss Anita's. She never really thinks about the quality of the ongoing, intentional interactions they should be receiving. And no one can fault her for that – for maybe not knowing the latest early learning and development research. She is simply focused on providing them with a safe and happy home life, simple meals, clean hand-me-downs and yard sale finds, and all the hugs and kisses they can stand.

> *When it came to making care decisions,…the educational and social environment was less often a determinative factor than whether the care was affordable, convenient in terms of the hours of care and location, and consistent with parents' work schedules.*
>
> *Chaudry, 2011; pg. 120*

Connie is like many, perhaps most, parents of young children who rightly focus on the day-to-day needs of home life. The selection of a childcare or preschool setting is often based on

cost, location, or word of mouth. This is particularly true with parents in low-income homes, who must balance cost and location with their own sometimes unpredictable schedules (Chaudry, 2011). As a single mother with limited funds and limited exposure to the research on how young children learn, Connie never really thinks about the activities that take place each day. Rather, she is focused on whether Maya and Knox like the food, what she will do with them when Miss Anita closes for Labor Day, and if she'll be charged more for being late for pick up next Tuesday. The quality of the learning that occurs each day is not a factor; after all, this isn't really "school."

**Definition of "High Need"**



Kentucky defines high-need children as those who live in a very low-income family, who have a physical or mental disability, who are in the child welfare system, and/or who are children of teen parents. Income eligibility for most state subsidized programs is typically 100-150% of poverty; regardless of these factors, our RTT-ELC project will ensure **all** children have access to quality ELD programs.

That's where Kentucky All★STARS comes in. An expansion of more than a decade of early learning work in the Commonwealth, our initiative will provide Connie with accessible, timely resources and ensure whatever early care and learning program she chooses will prepare Maya and Knox for a continuum of learning. Early learning and development **programs** will all meet minimum quality indicators. Early learning and development **professionals** will all have the support systems they need to continue their own professional growth. And early learning and development clients – the **children and families** of the Commonwealth – will all transition successfully from early learning to kindergarten and beyond.

Kentucky All★STARS is an expansion of existing work in the Commonwealth to ensure all children have access to high-quality childcare and preschool facilities, regardless of where each child lives, his/her family characteristics, or the family's knowledge of good early learning and development. Governor Paul Patton in 1999 established the Governor's Early Childhood Task Force; he recognized the quality of early learning and development experiences for our youngest children are directly related to the future economic development of Kentucky. The work of the Task Force resulted in a recommended **20-year plan** (Appendix) that was embraced by Governor Patton and implemented through the integrated actions of multiple Kentucky agencies,

partners and stakeholder groups. The four key areas of focus, which have been upheld through two decades and championed by our current Governor Steve Beshear, include:

- Assuring Maternal and Child Health
- Supporting Families
- Enhancing Early Care and Education
- Establishing the Support Structure

These four areas continue to be areas for funding and policy supports in Governor Beshear's second term; in fact, early learning and development for children is one of the Governor's Top 5 Priorities, a designation that has established work for early childhood in a protected category among state policy-makers. As noted on page 18, while more than $1.9 billion has been chiseled away from the Commonwealth's budget over the past 5 years, **Governor Beshear has protected and held constant funding for early learning and development**. Just two years ago, he formed the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC), an executive-level division of the Commonwealth's governmental structure dedicated to policies and practices for early childhood and development. The GOEC has been hard at work expanding the existing Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS); integrating training and support structures for early learning educators; creating and learning from longitudinal data systems, and developing communication and assistance systems for **all** families with young children.

These and other structures are outlined in our RTT-ELC proposal: **Kentucky All★STARS – Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System.** In the following pages, we briefly summarize how we will increase access and quality, and help ensure children – particularly high-need children – enter kindergarten with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful. Our RTT-ELC building blocks align in every respect to the holistic work of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood: Improving Environments for Learning, Supporting Families, and Using Longitudinal Data for Continuous Improvement (summarized below).

| | |
|---|---|
| **High Quality Early Learning Environments** | We will expand the STARS for KIDS NOW tiered quality rating system statewide, moving it from a voluntary system for licensed and certified programs only, to a **mandatory** system for licensing and continuous improvement monitoring for **all** early learning and development programs. Each and every program serving two or more non-relative children will be required to participate in the STARS rating system; including private preschool and daycare programs, home-based programs, Head Start programs, and public preschools. Licensure will be linked directly to the STARS system, ensuring all early learning and development programs meet an established minimum of quality. |
| **Supporting Families** | Leveraging partnerships with agencies already working with parents statewide, we will intentionally target the toxic stress that impacts many young children. Through the framework of Strengthening Families, we will build families' protective factors with agency partners targeting needs aligned to their existing work. Childcare and preschool facility leaders and teachers will participate in regional trainings, focusing their efforts on the protective factors related to the care and learning of young children. Early Childhood Educators are in a unique position to positively support families through daily contact with parents and children; they will be able to work with partner agencies to link parents to specific, timely supports. In addition, we will expand the Toyota bornlearning® Academies statewide. This series of parent workshops will be presented through existing Family Resource Centers across the state. Toyota bornlearning® Academies engage families with the school system long before a child is old enough to enter its doors, providing parents additional time to become comfortable in K-12 settings. Specific, age-appropriate learning strategies are shared in each session to give parents easy-to-use learning tools for their child. |
| **Access to Data** | We will integrate data systems from across the early childhood continuum, linking each and every system to the other. Already in place is Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System (LDS), already touted as a model for the nation. Other systems track professional learning for preschool and childcare personnel. And data for the new Kentucky kindergarten screener is in yet another system. Through All★STARS, we will connect new and existing pieces from multiple early childhood data systems to give Kentucky a single |

seamless, user-friendly information portal for individuals from birth through workforce entry. While data systems may not in and of themselves improve outcomes for young children, we will – by 2017 – be able to identify and analyze **specific factors which create success** for children and families. In short, we will now be able to determine the factors in early childhood that truly make a difference for young children and begin to isolate and replicate accordingly. This is critical to the sustainability of new early childhood strategies, as we will – through our third-party evaluator – begin to determine where dollars will be targeted as we move forward.

In summary, we will help families understand how to choose a high-quality early learning and development program for their children, ensure each and every child has access to high-quality care and early education (especially children with high needs), and integrate data systems for a usable, informative birth to workforce system to guide future decision-making. Ultimately, we will ensure all early learning settings allow the youngest Kentuckians to be Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Succeed.

## (A) Successful State Systems: Demonstrating past commitments to early learning

The stereotypes of Kentucky are many: fast horses, bourbon, coal mines, and poverty. Certainly, the first thought that comes to mind for many is not high-quality learning. However, Kentucky has for more than 20 years been a leader in reforming education, first with the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990, and most recently with Unbridled Learning, a legislative reform initiative passed in 2009. In just the last three years, the Kentucky Department of Education became the first in the nation to implement the Common Core in Language Arts and Mathematics (2011), known in Kentucky as the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS), and the Next Generation Science Standards (2013-14). These progressive measures have earned Kentucky national accolades.

A paradigm shift has also been occurring within Kentucky's **policies and programs for young children**. Governor Beshear in 2009 convened a 28-member Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) to review early childhood systems and make recommendations to improve child outcomes. The ECDE's eight recommendations – all accepted by the Governor – included the establishment of the Early Childhood Advisory Council

and the Office of Early Childhood, both created in 2011. They have continued to implement the recommendations set forth in the 20 Year Plan – the Comprehensive Task Force Report (2000) as well as the eight ECDE recommendations.

The Early Childhood Advisory Council has seven supporting workgroups (p. 11) each chaired by members who are representative of local and state experts in their particular subject matter. Each workgroup, which receives staff support from the Office of Early Childhood, works toward specific objectives aligned to the ECDE's recommendations. Below, we provide a summary of our history and key accomplishments.

## (A)(1)(a) Financial investment over five years, particularly for Children with High Needs

Despite five-year budget cuts of nearly $2 billion in the Commonwealth, including cuts for some agencies of up to 38 percent, Governor Beshear has worked with the Kentucky legislature to **protect funding for early learning**. As demonstrated in Table (A)(1)-4, Kentucky funding for young children with high needs has remained steady over the past five years. Kentucky's continuing commitment to the needs of our youngest citizens is clear: for more than three decades, the leadership of our Commonwealth has placed its full confidence squarely on the shoulders of our children. While some states have developed stricter eligibility criteria to limit services to only the most vulnerable, we continue to invest and expand services (i.e., leveraging resources, changing eligibility requirements, securing federal grants) to include more young children and parents.

Economists have determined year after year that the highest returns of any public investment (more than $7 for every dollar spent) may be found within high-quality early childhood education (Schweinhart, 1993). This investment stimulates economic growth and ensures future prosperity, creating jobs and enabling parents to earn while their children learn. Research has also shown that early childhood education helps to close the achievement gap and ensures children are ready to learn and succeed in school, compete in the global economy, and be positive contributors to thriving communities.

Obstacles which could affect future successes for Kentucky include being ranked 48$^{th}$ out of 50 states in median household income, as well as being ranked 47$^{th}$ out of 50 states in the percentage of people over 25 who have completed high school. In addition, a greater proportion of children live in poverty in Kentucky (26%) than in all but six other states, with 52% of the

State's children under 5 years of age living at 200% of the Federal poverty level (see Table (A)(1)-1). Given the challenges, it has at times been difficult to maintain dedicated spending lines for our young children. This has for us, like most other states, been particularly difficult during the economic downturn and the current slow recovery. However, for more than a decade and under the leadership of three governors, Kentucky has increased or held firm Early Learning Development Program funding. This could not be truer than at present; Governor Steve Beshear, now in his second term, has made early childhood programming one of only five key priorities for his administration, protecting current funding streams. Despite the obstacles, Kentucky is determined to transform Early Learning and Development systems for children. We see this as the key to breaking the cycle of poverty within the Commonwealth.

As outlined beginning on page 22, Governor Beshear's Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Advisory Council have continued their work through seven specific Workgroups, including:

**Early Childhood Advisory Council Workgroups**

- Assessment
- Community Collaboration
- Community Engagement
- Data Systems
- Program Investment
- Professional Development
  - Trainer Competencies Subgroup
  - Technical Assistance & Coaching Subgroup
- STARS for KIDS NOW (redesign workgroup)

We also should point out that, as part of the KIDS NOW 20 Year Plan, Kentucky invests 25 percent of the Phase 1 Tobacco Settlement Funds in the KIDS NOW Early Childhood Initiative. For a complete list of investments see the Appendix. Areas of targeted funding include the following:

- Beginning before birth, KIDS NOW Tobacco Funds help assure healthy birth outcomes through the Folic Acid campaign, HANDS home visiting, and KIDS NOW Plus, a substance abuse and prevention program.
- In the earliest months of life, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program and the Immunization Program help assure families can access appropriate supports while the Early Childhood Mental Health services and Oral Health Prevention and Education programs assure access to needed health and mental health services.

- For families with special challenges, First Steps (services to infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities and/or delays) and Children's Advocacy Centers (serving victims of sexual abuse) are available.
- Another goal of Tobacco Settlement investment is supporting high quality early learning environments. These funds allow the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to ensure families have access to high quality learning environments for their children. The STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system and its network of support, the professional development system and scholarship program (found on pages 56-57) all help to facilitate improved quality in early childhood programs.
- Building local capacity through our network of Community Early Childhood Councils, which are local, all volunteer organizations dedicated to ensuring high quality early learning and development programs, supporting families and sharing data within their communities.

The Kentucky Legislature has also supported all early learning and development legislation as well as related health and wellness programs for mothers and families since 2000. Key legislative items developed by the Governor have passed into law and been implemented statewide since that time, including the creation of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) (serving as the fiscal agent for this RTT-ELC project). As further evidence of Kentucky's support for early learning, the Commonwealth has not experienced the substantial decrease in the number of children with high needs served in ELD Programs as has been the case in many states (see Table (A)(1)-5). Kentucky's ratio of funding to the number of high-need children in the Commonwealth over the past five years is approximately $1.08 billion for the state's 177,000 children from low-income homes, or nearly $6,100/child over five years.

| Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income[1] families, by age | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Number of children from Low-Income families in the State** | **Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State** |
| **Infants under age 1** | 29,835 | 54.7% |
| **Toddlers ages 1 through 2** | 59,816 | 53.2% |
| **Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry** | 87,577 | 51.7% |
| **Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families** | 177,228 | 52.3% |
| *Source: NCCP calculations based on 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data* | | |

[1] Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal poverty rate.

**Table (A)(1)-2: Special populations of Children with High Needs**

*The State should use these data to guide its thinking about where specific activities may be required to address special populations' unique needs. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.*

| Special populations: Children who . . . | Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who… | Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who… |
|---|---|---|
| **Have disabilities or developmental delays**[2] | 14,144 | 3.8% |
| **Are English learners**[3] | 23,831* | 7.1% |
| **Reside on "Indian Lands"** | N/A | N/A |
| **Are migrant**[4] | 1,299** | 0.39% |
| **Are homeless**[5] | 10,293*** | 3.0% |
| **Are in foster care** | 2339**** | 0.69% |
| **Are living in a rural community** | 140,246***** | 41.6% |

**Children 0-5 with one or more foreign born parents. Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data. Kentucky English language learner data not collected ages 0-5*

***Children 0-5 who did not live in the United States or Puerto Rico one year ago. Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data.*

****Campaign to End Homelessness 2009. There are 12,352 homeless children under age 6 in Kentucky. We assumed an equal age distribution to get an estimation of the number of children birth to K-entry.*

*****HHS Administration for Children and Families 2011 Child Welfare Report Outcomes Data.*

******Total number of children 0-5 that live in a rural area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, calculated by using total population percentages and extrapolating to the total number of children 0-5 from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data.*

*Percentage calculations based on 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data.*

[2] For purposes of this application, children with disabilities or developmental delays are defined as children birth through kindergarten entry that have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

[3] For purposes of this application, children who are English learners are children birth through kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

[4] For purposes of this application, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of "migratory child" in ESEA section 1309(2).

[5] The term "homeless children" has the meaning given the term ""homeless children and youths" in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (425 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).

| **Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age**<br>*Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age** | | | |
| **Type of Early Learning and Development Program** | **Infants under age 1** | **Toddlers ages 1 through 2** | **Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry** | **Total** |
| **State-funded preschool**<br>*Data Source and Year: Data Source and Year: KY Preschool Program Report 2012-13* | N/A | N/A | 20,817 | 20,817 |
| **Early Head Start and Head Start**[6]<br>*Data Source and Year: Head Start Program Information Report Enrollment Statistics Report 2011-2012* | 737 | 2,184 | 17,606 | 20, 527 |
| **Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619**<br>*Data Source and Year: Infants & Toddler - Part C (First Steps) Child Count Data (618 data report), 12/01/11, Preschoolers - Part B Data Source and Year: KY Preschool Program Report 2012-13* | 306 | 4147 | 9661 | 14,144 |
| **Programs funded under Title I of ESEA** | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* |
| **Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program**<br>*Data Source and Year:*<br>*KICCS II 2013*** | 8,244 | 26,657 | 27,954 | 62,855 |
| ** Number of children participating in programs funded under Title I is not available because data is not collected for public preschool programs based on chosen district funding stream.*<br>***CCDF Data is not able to provide unduplicated counts for different age brackets. Some children may change care levels through the year. Unduplicated counts can only be shown for the total number of students.* | | | | |

[6] Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

**Table (A)(1)-3b: Participation of Children in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State, by Race/Ethnicity**

Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

| Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State | Number of Hispanic children | Number of Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Asian Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Black or African American Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Children of Two or more races | Number of Non-Hispanic White Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State-funded preschool<br>*Data Source & Year: Infinite Campus Ad Hoc Data Pull 9/17/13* | 2376 | 31 | 348 | 3770 | 26 | 1317 | 20330 |
| Early Head Start and Head Start[7]<br>*Data Source & Year: Head Start Program Information Report Enrollment Statistics Report, 2011-2012* | 1656 | 40 | 92 | 3557 | 19 | 1592 | 14393 |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C<br>*Data Source and Year: Part C (First Steps) Child Count Data (618 data report), 12/01/12* | 262 | 9 | 47 | 424 | 5 | 196 | 3510 |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* | N/A* |

[7] Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

**Table (A)(1)-3b: Participation of Children in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State, by Race/Ethnicity**

Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

| Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State | Number of Hispanic children | Number of Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Asian Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Black or African American Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Children | Number of Non-Hispanic Children of Two or more races | Number of Non-Hispanic White Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| section 619 | | | | | | | |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA | N/A** | N/A** | N/A** | N/A** | N/A** | N/A** | N/A** |
| Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program*** | 1,397 | 21 | 55 | 11,372 | 11,372 | N/A | 20,669 |

**Number of children participating in programs funded by IDEA, Part B is not available because that data is included in participation data for public preschool.*

** *Number of children participating in programs funded under Title I is not available because data is not collected for public preschool programs based on chosen district funding stream.*

****CCDF Data is only reported through preschool care levels. Ethnicity and race are required fields in KICCS, but when clients do not respond to the question, 'no response' is an option. Data for two or more race is not records. KICCS Data only records one race for each care level. Data for this column is captured as Not Applicable based on parent response and system restrictions.*

| Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years | | | | |
| **Type of investment** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** |
| **Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start**[8] | No state funding | No state funding | No state funding | No state funding | No state funding |
| **State-funded preschool** *Specify: these funds include state contributions to IDEA Part B* | $75,127,000 | $72,531,300 | $71,806,300 | $71,315,300 | $71,315,300 |
| **State contributions to IDEA Part C** | $32,410,000 | $31,438,700 | $29,567,900 | $27,154,600 | $28,332,500 |
| **State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry** | Included in state-funded preschool amount above | Included in state-funded preschool amount above | Included in state-funded preschool amount above | Included in state-funded preschool amount above | Included in state-funded preschool amount above |
| **Total State contributions to CCDF**[9] | $22,333,400 | $18,904,700 | $17,921,000 | $18,280,923 | $38,155,958 |
| **State match to CCDF** *Exceeded/**Met**/Not Met* | $5,348,400 | $2,083,900 | $1,574,400 | $1,430,467 | $21,166,863 |
| **TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs**[10] | $22,211,000 | $28,289,500 | $31,784,100 | $41,207,800 | $31,693,200 |

[8] Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

[9] Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

[10] Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

| Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years | | | | |
| **Type of investment** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** |
| **Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs –** *Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program. Follow up to statewide newborn screening (tobacco funding up to FY11; now agency and General Fund supported)* | $1,009,500 | $1,038,600 | $1,191,800 | $983,832 | $989,416 |
| **DPH Hands** – *approximately 70% is Restricted Funds from third party payers (Medicaid)* | $31,202,800 | $32,135,000 | $27,678,100 | $29,148,400 | $32,041,900 |
| **DPH Mental Health** | $1,486,700 | $1,072,400 | $935,400 | $794,400 | $922,800 |
| **DPH Children's Oral Health** | $816,800 | $437,800 | $304,600 | $220,400 | $230,100 |
| **DPH Child Care Health Consultation (Healthy Start in Childcare)** | $2,512,100 | $2,326,800 | $1,062,900 | $855,700 | $667,000 |
| **DPH Reach Out and Read** | $323,200 | $215,100 | $143,500 | $200,100 | $97,900 |
| **KIDS NOW PLUS (tobacco)** – *substance abuse treatment and prevention for pregnant women* | $1,127,300 | $974,900 | $742,700 | $853,300 | $667,000 |
| **Total State contributions:** | $195,908,200 | $191,448,700 | $184,712,700 | $192,445,222 | $226,279,937 |

*[Source]: Kentucky State Government Accounting System (eMARS). Kentucky's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. NOTE: The increase in 2013 is a result of ONE-TIME funding. These funds were used and depleted in FY13.*

**Figures for state contributions for special education represent a percentage of the overall preschool funding and are therefore a subset of the data in line one for preschool.*

**(A)(1)(b) Increasing the number of Children with High Needs participating in programs**

The Commonwealth has a history of successful, innovative initiatives in the field of early childhood development and education: from Head Start's inception in Kentucky in 1965, its expansion in 2008 with stimulus money, the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990, to the KIDS NOW initiative and legislation in 2000. Here, we will review key historical efforts upon which the Governor's Office of Early Childhood continues to build.

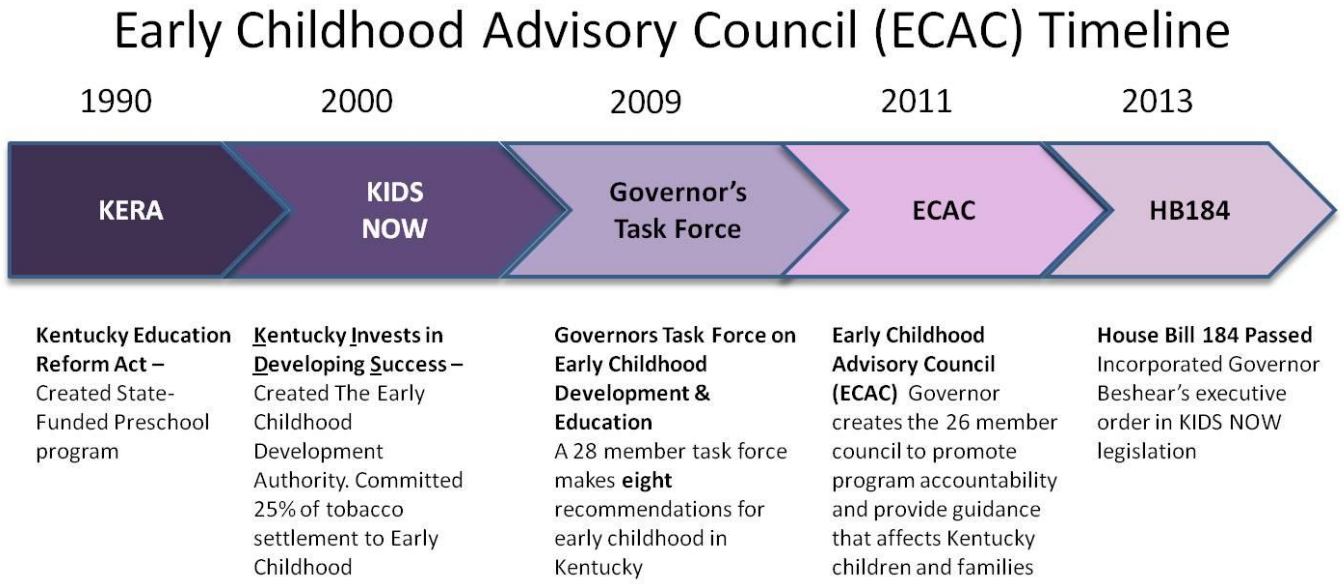
**KERA.** The Kentucky Education and Reform Act (KERA) of 1990, at the time of its passage, was the most profound statewide educational reform act in the country. KERA established equitable patterns of school finance, new forms of school governance, statewide educational standards, and a state-funded preschool program. Initially, the preschool program served four-year-old children of families at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty rate, and three and four year old children with special needs. In 2006, the program guidelines were expanded to include children up to 150 percent of the federal poverty rate. Currently, the program is serving a total of 20,817 children.

The KERA preschool program (i.e., public preschool) has produced several notable results since its inception. University of Kentucky researchers launched a longitudinal study in 1991 which followed the progress of 3,528 students. In 1999, their summative evaluation concluded that the program "has a positive effect on children's development during preschool, their readiness for kindergarten, and their social and academic progress through the fifth grade." Specifically, researchers noted that children coming from a KERA preschool program made significant progress across all areas (e.g., social/emotional, motor skills, cognitive), were rated by teachers as being as ready for kindergarten as their more affluent peers, and continued to do as well in both social and academic skills as their peers through the fifth grade.

**KIDS NOW.** Building upon these reform efforts was the unanimously passed legislation in 2000 entitled Kentucky Invests in Developing Success Now (KIDS NOW). As previously noted, the Early Childhood Development Authority-adopted a 20 Year Comprehensive Task Force Report – which we call our 20 Year Plan – that organized the KIDS NOW program initiatives into four categories: Assuring Maternal & Child Health; Supporting Families; Enhancing Early Care and Education; and Establishing the Support Structure, all based on the whole-child approach. KIDS NOW established ongoing funding for its programs and policy changes through

a dedicated 25 percent of Kentucky's Phase I Tobacco Settlement monies. Funds used to support these areas are considered investments reaping long-term outcomes for the Commonwealth. Our ongoing expansion of KIDS NOW, which began in 2010, is outlined beginning on page 30.

**Task Force on Early Childhood and Education (ECDE).** In July of 2009, Governor Beshear appointed a 28-member Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE). The Governor directed the Task Force to promote greater collaboration among providers of services to young children and reliance on accepted early learning standards and assessment; to bring a renewed emphasis to quality at all levels; and to determine a common understanding and definition of "school readiness." Additionally, the Task Force was asked to review the current service delivery system to ensure a more effective use of the public's resources and a successful transition to kindergarten. The Task Force members brought a variety of professional and community experience to the process. Membership included representatives from the public school system, universities and Head Start; state government including health, education and social service agencies; day cares, advocates and community based providers. A list of Task Force members is found in the Appendix.




In late 2009 and throughout 2010, the Task Force focused on the development and compilation of its recommendations to address greater collaboration among service providers; to ensure quality from early childhood through kindergarten; to reach agreement on what constitutes

school readiness; and to develop a reliance on accepted early learning standards and assessments. Throughout the discussions, the concept of the whole child approach was paramount in that members included the health, social-emotional, cultural and cognitive aspects of a child and continually acknowledged the importance of the relationships among children, families, schools and communities.

As noted above, the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education made eight recommendations in July 2011; in the two years that have followed, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) and partners have accomplished many of the tasks set forth in those recommendations and have continued the efforts set forth in the 20 Year Plan. Following is a brief summary of the accomplishments of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and its Early Childhood Advisory Council since their formation two years ago; it is the work of the GOEC and Council that drives this RTT-ELC proposal. Each area noted here is integrated elsewhere in these pages, as noted at right by section number. In addition, we provide a graphic of the Kentucky Early Learning Business Model (page 53).We also group each accomplishment as aligned to the original recommendations (8) of the Governor's Task Force

**Recommendations & Aligned Accomplishments (✓)**

**Recommendation 1:** Kentucky should adopt and distribute the school readiness definition to local communities, schools, state agencies and early childhood advocates.

- ✓ Kentucky adopted and distributed a school readiness definition to local communities, schools, state agencies and early childhood advocates. Promoted by GOEC, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), and the Division of Child Care (DCC) in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), the definition provided the basis for selecting the kindergarten readiness screener. *Section E1*

**Recommendation 2:** Working in cooperation with the ECAC, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) should identify and implement a screening tool for children's transition and entry into kindergarten and coordinate its use with other child assessment requirements.

- ✓ Working with the ECAC, the KDE selected and has implemented a screening tool for children's transition and entry into kindergarten and coordinating its use with other child assessment requirements. The Assessment Workgroup of the ECAC crafted, and KDE

adopted, a regulation (704 KAR 5:070) for a common kindergarten readiness screen to be administered by all school districts with the goal to assess the readiness of children for kindergarten across developmental domains. Kentucky contracted with Curriculum Associates, LLC to use the Brigance® Kindergarten Screen. The screener was piloted in 2012 and used in all Kentucky school districts in August 2013. The screen provides teachers with information about individual children, provides districts information about their individual programs, and provides communities with a planning tool. The readiness data will inform future decision-making and facilitate deliberate planning for programs and services which will improve early childhood outcomes. *Section E1*

**Recommendation 3:** Kentucky should develop a governance model for the system of early childhood services in the Commonwealth.

- ✓ By Executive Order, Governor Beshear created and appointed members to the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) (a broadly representative group of early childhood educators, administrators and advocates) in July of 2011. This body replaced the Early Childhood Development Authority (who had governed the KIDS NOW initiative since the passage of House Bill 706 in 2000), assumed all of their responsibilities, and broadened their mandate. The ECAC has seven workgroups: Assessment, Community Collaboration, Community Engagement, Data, Professional Development, Program Investment, and STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system. All work groups are chaired by ECAC members and broadly representative of local and state experts in their particular subject matter. *Section A*

**Recommendation 4:** Increase opportunities for, and reduce barriers to, collaboration and coordination at all levels of the early childhood system through provision of technical assistance, use of incentives and development of measures to assess and evaluate collaboration and coordination efforts.

- ✓ Kentucky offers a wide range of services to families and children from prenatal to school entry. These services are delivered through a variety of state government agencies, local government, health, mental health, social service entities, non-profit and for-profit providers, and federally funded quasi-government entities. The ECAC and GOEC have worked continuously to increase the dialogue among GOEC, KDE and the CHFS on issues related to early childhood care and education, thus assuring better alignment at the state level.

Collaboration is also mandated at the local level through participation requirements for the grassroots Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs). We have established the demonstration of collaboration and coordination with other early care and education providers as a condition of funding for grant eligibility. *Section A*

**Recommendation 5:** Ensure that Early Childhood Standards are widely distributed and used effectively in programming for high quality child care, early care and preschool programs, Head Start and used across the education community, including postsecondary programs.

- ✓ Developed in 2003, the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards represent specific learning standards for children from birth through 4 years of age. These standards are designed as a framework to assist families, early care and education professionals, administrators and others in understanding what children should know and be able to do at intervals from birth through four years of age. This was revolutionary at the time of its inception and is now being reproduced in states across the country. The standards have been widely distributed and are being effectively used across Kentucky's early childhood systems including KDE, Head Start, Child Care and CECCs. The Assessment Work group aligned the Early Childhood Standards with the kindergarten readiness definition to emphasize standards for approaches toward learning and to realign the standards with the Head Start child development and early learning framework. This work has been incorporated into the Professional Development Framework core content, the Continuous Assessment Guide, and the parent guides. *Section C1*

**Recommendation 6:** Support the work of KDE in promoting a model curriculum framework for public preschools and related review of kindergarten standards.

- ✓ We continue to work with KDE to promote and align our joint work. The framework serves as a guide to instructional supervisors, principals and teachers on the process of designing and reviewing local curriculum. Guidance for the framework suggest school staff become familiar with the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards (KYECS) and their alignment to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS) to support the successful transition of children from preschool to kindergarten, as well as primary to intermediate and beyond. *Section C1*

**Recommendation 7:** Identify strategies including incentives and other supports to increase participation in STARS for KIDS Now program and make it more meaningful to parents.

- ✓ The STARS Workgroup of the ECAC has undertaken a comprehensive review of the current quality rating system. The review looks at innovations in systems across other states in the years since Kentucky's TQRIS was developed in 2001, and makes recommendations for changes to the current rating system. The STARS Redesign Workgroup will be charged with the expansion of the system as part of this RTT-ELC project. Accomplishments within the STARS system – including our work with early care and development programs is found throughout this proposal. *Section B*

**Recommendation 8:** Strengthen the role of the Community Early Childhood Councils (CECC) by simplifying the grant process and identifying the needs of each local community to determine support for the local council.

- ✓ The Community Collaboration Workgroup of the ECAC and GOEC have focused intently on this work, best practices, competencies and CECC needs in 2012. The Workgroup and GOEC surveyed funded and unfunded councils to determine and assess their challenges and opportunities and to learn best practices. As noted above, the number of Councils and funding to support those groups has increased significantly in 2013 and 2014. *Section A*

**Additional achievements.** In addition, the GOEC has worked with partners to achieve additional steps that support these recommendations and the overall mission of our division. These are noted here.

- ✓ **An improved early childhood workforce** through improved education and training for those working with young children. We have provided incentives through the Division of Child Care for programs to hire more educated staff and to encourage existing staff to access educational opportunities, and have created a system of regional counselors to help aspiring students access appropriate coursework and financial assistance. **KIDS NOW Scholarships,** which are funded through the Master Tobacco Settlement, are available for professionals employed in early learning and development programs. **Developing a Workforce Pipeline** by embedding requirements for state and nationally recognized early childhood education and development credentials in high schools and community colleges as well as part-time programs in four year institutions. *Section A*
- ✓ **Creating tools and materials for parents, teachers and caregivers,** written in easy-to-understand language and with step-by-step strategies for engaging young children. The

Community Engagement Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council distributes monthly messaging through email and social media. *Section C4*

- ✓ **Expanding partnerships.** For example, our close work with the Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) to engage families; Family Resource Youth Services Centers and others to implement the Toyota bornlearning® Academies; and the Department of Public Health and others to embed the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in all programs. *Section C4*
- ✓ **Development of Early Childhood Profiles** which include information about kindergarten readiness, access to preschool, Head Start and High Quality Care and Education Programs, as well as a picture of the early childhood workforce and risk factors that may impact school readiness. An example is included in the Appendix. We will also integrate other early childhood data through Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System, managed through the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (a shared repository and data warehouse that includes sophisticated modules for matching data across different sources with different types of identifiers, report systems, etc.). This malleable system will help provide a whole picture for the individual child as well as information on programs and policy results at the community, regional, and state levels. *Section E2*

**Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State**

*Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.*

| Type of Early Learning and Development Program | Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years[11] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2009** | **2010** | **2011[12]** | **2012[17]** | **2013[17]** |
| **State-funded preschool** *(annual census count; Oct 1 count)* | 22,299 | 23,342 | 23,803 | 22,443 | N/A |
| **Early Head Start and Head Start[13]** *(Total Funded Enrollment) Head Start Program Information Report Enrollment Statistics Report 2011-2012* | 16,199 | 16,927 | 17,276 | 17,210* | N/A |
| **Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619** *(annual December 1 count)* | 11,734 Part B<br><br>5,077 Part C | 11,447 Part B<br><br>4,641 Part C | 12,166 Part B<br><br>4592 Part C | 9661 Part B<br><br>4453 Part C | N/A Part B<br><br>N/A Part C |
| **Programs funded under Title I of ESEA** *(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report )* | N/A** | N/A** | N/A* * | N/A** | N/A** |
| **Programs receiving CCDF funds** *(average monthly served)* | 70,186 | 69,152 | 71,528 | 67,384 | 62,855 |

*[The final column of data should match that reported in Table (A)(1)-3.]*

** Data Reported for Early Head Start and Head Start Year 2012 does not match the number reported in Table (A)(1)-3 for Early Head Start and Head Start Participation by Age because the number reported in (A)(1)-3 is Total Cumulative Enrollment and the number reported in this table is Total Funded Enrollment.*

***Number of children participating in programs funded under Title I is not available because data is not collected for public preschool programs based on chosen district funding stream.*

[11] Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

[12] Note to Reviewers: The number of children served reflects a mix of Federal, State, and local spending. Head Start, IDEA, and CCDF all received additional Federal funding under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which may be reflected in increased numbers of children served in 2009-2011.

[13] Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

## (A)(1)(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, polices, practices

As outlined below, Kentucky's reform movements exist because of strong leadership, including, in particular, Governor Steve Beshear and the Kentucky General Assembly (the Kentucky Legislature). Wins for early childhood include:

- Kentucky Education Reform Act, 1990 (KERA)
- House Bill 706 (2000): Formation of the Early Childhood Development Authority, which initially implemented KIDS NOW and had the oversight of a number of early learning and development initiatives.
- Executive Order, July 2011, which formed the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, replacing the Early Childhood Development Authority and transferring authority to the GOEC to implement the Development Authority's recommendations.
- House Bill 184 (2013) incorporated the change from Governor Beshear's 2011 executive order into legislation.
- Acceptance of a common definition of School Readiness (2012), which was then accepted by all state agencies that work with young children (including the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky Head Start Association, and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services).
- Establishment (2003) and use of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards for Birth through age 4. (Revised 2011, 2013)
- Establishment of a universal kindergarten screener (2012; 704 KAR 5:070) used in all public schools beginning with the 2013-14 school year.

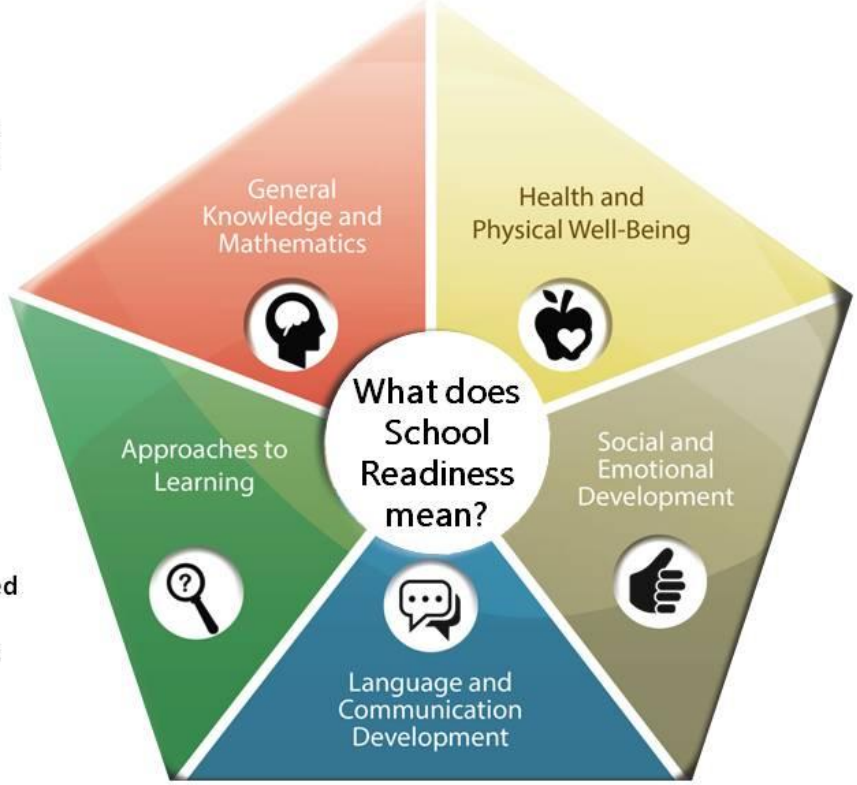
Key to the ongoing work around early learning and development is the formation of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Advisory Council that guides its work. The GOEC began operation in 2011, utilizing executive staff to facilitate systemic changes across early childhood systems with a goal of assuring more Kentucky children, particularly those with high needs, have the support needed to be ready to succeed in kindergarten. In its brief history, the Office has integrated and expanded statewide agency partnerships to leverage existing resources and integrate services across public and private agencies serving young children.

# School Readiness in Kentucky

School readiness means that each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success and ability to be Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed.

- Sorts and classifies objects
- Is learning to identify basic colors
- Is learning to recognize name and general shapes
- Counts up to 30
- Counts sets of objects up to 10

- Child is curious
- Has the ability to focus and listen
- Continues in tasks that are challenging
- Child plays in groups or pairs based on interest
- Child initiates learning experiences



- Eats a balanced diet
- Gets plenty of rest
- Receives immunizations
- Receives regular medical and dental care
- Runs, jumps and does other activities

- Is learning to play and share with others
- Follows simple rules and routines
- Shows curiosity
- Is learning to explore new things
- Is learning to work alone

- Knows full name
- Is learning to write own name
- Uses pictures to tell stories
- Is learning home address
- Speaks in five or six word sentences

While service silos certainly exist, the Office of Early Childhood is integrating the work of partner agencies, enabling more services to be provided with the same levels of funding. It is the Office of Early Childhood that presents this proposal and will lead the work of Kentucky All★STARS. This will include determining through program implementation and evaluation the economic impacts and effectiveness of program strategies to create sustainability for the program. As seen in Table (A)(1)-5 the number of children served in many of Kentucky's programs have fluctuated over the years; consistency in services and expanded work with families will strengthen the numbers of young children served as we move forward. In addition, we provide here a brief review of programs and services that support learning and health areas for children and families.

- An Oral Health Education and Prevention Program with oral health screenings and fluoride applications provided to over 200,000 children to date. Since 2003, Kentucky has also participated in KIDS SMILE, a program to train health department nurses to provide fluoride varnish for children, reaching more than 45,000 children.
- Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS), a voluntary home visitation program for new and expectant parents currently serving more than 11,000 families with more than 150,000 home visits annually. Relative to a comparison group of similarly at-risk families in the state, first-time parents who participated in HANDS were 35 percent less likely to have a premature infant, 32 percent less likely to have a low birth weight infant, and 49 percent less likely to have a very low birth weight infant. Relative to all other families statewide, first time parents participating in HANDS were 69 percent less likely to experience infant mortality and 50 percent less likely to visit the emergency room.
- Child Advocacy Centers for children who have been sexually abused. The goal of these centers is to mitigate the physical and mental health impact of sexual abuse on affected children through community-based services in child-friendly settings across Kentucky. Funding has been provided to increase the capacity of the fifteen regional centers and has also funded Medical Unit Coordinators for each regional center, for improved quality and efficiency of all centers.
- The First Steps program which provides services each year to over 12,000 children with developmental disabilities from birth to age 3 and their families. First Steps is Kentucky's response to the federal Infant-Toddler Program Part C of the IDEA Act. First Steps offers

comprehensive services through a variety of community agencies and service disciplines. Participating children experience significant improvement in development and learning, and services and support for families help reduce stress.

- To enhance early care and education, Kentucky has created the Professional Development Framework for early childhood educators including key components to address the need for education, training, and credentialing of early childhood professionals. Structured teaching and learning experiences which support professional growth and development are also included. Critical components of the Professional Development Framework ensure all early care, intervention, and education staff are competent, confident, highly qualified and able to implement practices consistently and with a high degree of fidelity; are consistent in the use of high quality practices and programming across the state; seek continuous quality improvement with staff able to manage change and effectively use available resources; provide high quality services to children and families; and see measurable improvements in outcomes for children. Other programs and practices include: A Scholarship Fund for early childhood educators has been established and currently provides scholarships to more than 1,000 recipients each year, with 1491 college scholarships and 846 non-college scholarships awarded and 3, 135 providers receiving new or renewed credentials in 2012.
- The Healthy Start in Child Care Health Consultation program provides consultation on child health, safety, nutrition, and social/emotional well-being to early learning and development programs. Consultants include Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and Health Educators who consult with child care providers and families to promote healthy, safe, and nurturing environments for optimal child development.
- STARS for KIDS NOW, a **Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System** (TQRIS) for licensed child care centers and family child care homes. Currently, 1,003 providers participate in the voluntary STARS for KIDS NOW and receive annual incentives and achievement grants from Kentucky to support their improvement. It is this system that we will modify and expand for use with all early learning and development programs, public preschool and Head Start. For a more thorough description, go to pages 91-137.
- A statewide network of local Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) who serve as a catalyst for bringing community members together to support issues of importance to children and families. CECCs address the unique needs and strengths of local communities

related to early childhood. As outlined fully in A2, this network will be **critical in supporting the work of Kentucky All★STARS**.

As stated above, Kentucky has long been a leader in early education reform efforts, most recently in the creation of the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. Through robust legislation, collaborative programs, and innovative strategies, Kentucky will continue to be a leader in ensuring that all children have access to resources, particularly for Children with High Needs.

**(A)(1)(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for high quality…**

By incorporating the initiatives noted in Section A1c as well as other noted initiatives found elsewhere in this proposal, Kentucky has a solid foundation for a high quality early learning development system, including: early learning standards, a comprehensive series of assessments, family engagement and efficacy strategies, health promotion practices, professional learning for early childhood educators, a universal kindergarten entry screener, and effective data practices and systems. Strategies and initiatives are briefly outlined here. **Please note**: each of these strategies or initiatives is already fully in place **or** is being expanded through Kentucky All★STARS. Additional information on each item is found in **Section B**; page numbers are indicated in the headers below.

**Kentucky Early Childhood Standards (pg. 128+).** The EC Standards were designed as a framework to assist parents as well as early care, intervention and education professionals and administrators understand the knowledge and capabilities of children from **birth through age four**. These standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness as demonstrated in Table (A)(1)-6, below, and have been linked to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards (KCAS) from the Kentucky Department of Education for K-12. We have also included the standards – which include Birth to 3 and 3s and 4s – in our Appendix. Examples of the alignment from early learning to primary school grades is also provided in A2.

| **Table (A)(1)-6 : Current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards**<br>*Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the State's Early Learning and Development Standards address the different age groups by Essential Domain of School Readiness* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Age Groups** | | |
| **Essential Domains of School Readiness** | **Infants** | **Toddlers** | **Preschoolers** |
| **Language and literacy development** | X | X | X |
| **Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)** | X | X | X |
| **Approaches toward learning** | X | X | X |
| **Physical well-being and motor development** | X | X | X |
| **Social and emotional development** | X | X | X |
| *Kentucky's Early Learning Standards are age appropriate and are separate into two sets: Birth to 3, and 3s and 4s. A copy of the Standards may be found in the Appendix; a brief chart of the alignment is on page 149 .* | | | |

**Comprehensive Assessment Systems (pg. 195+)**. Kentucky has a long history of screening and assessing children with high needs, particularly families that receive services for children with disabilities and families with children that qualify for Head Start or the state-funded public preschool program. As previously noted, the state-funded public preschool program began in 1990 with the passage of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). KERA provided districts with the funding to enroll four-year-old children who live at or below 150% of the federal poverty level. In addition, any three- or four-year-old child diagnosed with a disability is eligible to attend state-funded public preschool. State–funded public preschool programs are required to coordinate with local medical and social services to ensure that any child enrolled in the program receive child development and health screening.

Other assessments within our system – environmental rating scales, our universal kindergarten screener, quality self-study tool, and more – include those peculiar to Head Start and public preschool as well as the STARs tiered quality rating and improvement system. Kentucky's Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide, developed in 2006, identifies assessments aligned with state standards, including those used to promote child learning and development (Formative Assessments), to identify children for health and special services (Screening Measures), to monitor trends and evaluate programs and services (Measures of Environmental Quality and Quality of Adult-Child Interactions), as well as recommended classroom and instructional assessments. Table (A)(1)-7, below, presents the existing integration

of Kentucky's Comprehensive Assessment System into early learning statewide.

**Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required w/in the State**

*Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.*

| Types of programs or systems | Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Screening Measures** | **Formative Assessments** | **Measures of Environmental Quality** | **Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions** | **Other** |
| **State-funded preschool** *Specify:* | X | X | X | | X (diagnostic) |
| **Early Head Start and Head Start**[14] | X | X | X | X | |
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part C** | X | X | N/A | N/A | |
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619** | X | X | X | | |
| **Programs funded under Title I of ESEA** | X | X | X | | |
| **Programs receiving CCDF funds** | | | X – see below (QRIS) | | |
| **Current QRIS requirements by Tier** | | | | | |
| *Tier I (lowest tier)* | | | X | | |
| *Tier II* | | | X | | |
| *Tier III* | | | X | | |
| *Tier IV* | | | X | | |
| **State licensing requirements** | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| *Current TQRIS is **voluntary** and only applies to childcare centers that choose to participate.* | | | | | |

[14] Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

**Health promotion practices (pg.99+).** In addressing the role of health in early learning, programs have been developed to ensure healthy births, promote access to healthcare as well as healthy and safe environments, and to promote healthy social, emotional and physical development. As part of whole child support, the State has instituted various preventative programs targeting such things as prevention of birth defects (through the Folic acid Campaign, and newborn metabolic screening), prevention of contagious diseases (through immunizations for the under-insured), prevention of early childhood cavities (through the Oral Health Education and Prevention Program), prevention and early intervention for behavioral and emotional problems (through the Early Childhood Mental Health program), family support (through the HANDS program), and technical assistance to early learning development programs and schools on health issues (Child Care Health Consultation and obesity prevention).

In addition, Governor Beshear has provided strong leadership and support in enrolling more children in the Kentucky Child Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) and/or Medicaid to promote child preventative health care, and reduce the costs of treating chronic diseases later in life. The Governor also created the Healthy Smiles Kentucky oral health program initiative to improve the dental health of Kentucky's children.

**Family engagement strategies.** Kentucky is increasing kindergarten readiness by promoting family engagement strategies, as briefly noted here. Additional information may be found as indicated.

- Family engagement standards are woven into the STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system to ensure culturally and linguistically competent support and services to meet the needs of local communities. Beginning on page 91, we describe the anticipated expansion of these strategies in the new STARS TQRIS (see Table (A)(1)-9 for current tier standards and description as well as base level mandates for state-funded preschool and Head Start).
- Family and community relationships are included in the core knowledge and competency expectations for the early childhood workforce, as outlined in Kentucky's Early Childhood Professional Development framework (outlined on page 178 ; and included in the Appendix).
- A number of statewide family support and engagement initiatives are under way in Kentucky such as the HANDS home visiting program (p. 60), school-based Family Resource Centers that provide resources and services to low-income families, and Help Me Grow, which

provides parents with Ages and Stages Screeners that allow them to track their child's development from one month to five years of age.

- Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) are a key strategy in increasing collaboration and improving local implementation of our work plan. As local, all volunteer early education leaders, CECCs are a direct access point for families to better understand early childhood development. For better than 10 years, CECCs have worked within local communities to establish relationships, disseminate data, and work with families to improve childhood outcomes across the state. Local CECCs receive funding through a competitive granting process distributed through the GOEC. Beginning in 2011, the Community Collaboration Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood have focused intensely on building the capacity and effectiveness of CECCs as a **local leadership group** working to improve early childhood outcomes.
- The Strengthening Families Framework is being finalized by an ad hoc group representing every department of government that interacts with young children as well as expert stakeholders in the field will be implemented statewide in 2015 (p. 161). Through the framework, we will work with partner agencies to build families' protective factors, and align needs to existing work of partners. Childcare and preschool facility leaders and teachers will participate in regional trainings, focusing their efforts on protective factors related to the care and learning of young children.
- The Toyota bornlearning® Academy, currently with 37 sites in operation in Kentucky, is a series of parent workshops being presented through existing Family Resource Centers across the state (p.161). Toyota bornlearning® Academies engage families with the school system long before a child is old enough to enter its doors, providing parents additional time to become comfortable in K-12 settings. Specific, age-appropriate learning strategies are shared in each session to give parents easy-to-use learning tools for their child.

Finally, communication and outreach to engage families includes tools and materials for parents, like our Parent Guides and the School Readiness definition flyer. We have printed and distributed more than 100,000 guides in the last two years. We also provide a wide variety of resources to families on our web site, in a section particularly targeted to families. The Community Engagement Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council also creates and distributes a monthly message aimed at reaching families and communities in an effort to speak

with one voice to families through the early childhood community. Messages are formatted in an interactive newsletter to increase interest without eliminating novice Internet users. An example is included in the Appendix.

**The development of early childhood educators (pg. 56, 178)** The professional development of early childhood educators in Kentucky is based upon the State's Early Childhood Professional Development Framework – Kentucky's Workforce and Competency Framework. This Framework governs the articulation, core content, credentials, scholarships and training for early childhood professionals. Partnerships for training delivery include Institutions of Higher Education, Regional Training Centers, Child Care Aware, Kentucky Educational Television (KET), Community Early Childhood Councils and others in coordination with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (Table (A)(1)-10 contains a full list of credentials offered in Kentucky; Table (A)(1)-11 lists institutions and organizations offering these credentials). Kentucky also has an extensive scholarship program administered by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority to support early childhood educators pursuing development opportunities.

**Definition of "kindergarten ready"**

In Kentucky, school readiness means each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success.

**Kindergarten entry assessments.** In 2010, the Governor's Early Childhood Task Force – the precursor to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood – developed a school readiness definition which formed the foundation for Kentucky's common kindergarten entry screener. The adopted definition covers all of the essential domains of school readiness including the five developmental competencies necessary for success (approaches to learning, cognitive, physical, communication, and social-emotional). In Kentucky, school readiness means each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success. Beginning in the 2013-2014 academic year, every Kentucky public school district administered the **common kindergarten entry screener** adopted by the Kentucky Department of Education (Brigance® Kindergarten Screen). The screener will provide districts with an element of measuring a student's readiness for school across the five developmental competencies/domains. The

screener provides community leaders and policy makers specific indicators to direct resources and supports for early learning as well as public education.

**Effective data practices.** In Section A2 (p.71 beginning), we provide a full explanation of the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS), housed within the Kentucky Center on Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS). The KLDS is Kentucky's shared repository for data – a warehouse for storing longitudinal data sets. It includes sophisticated modules for matching data across different sources with different types of identifiers, report development systems, and a data model that allows identifiable data to be stripped from the records it receives. When, two years ago, Governor Beshear called upon the Early Childhood Advisory Council to begin developing and implementing recommendations on a data collection system for early childhood services, health services, and other programs, KCEWS and the KLDS had to be part of the solution. The KLDS is a malleable system that is sensitive to the federal and state privacy concerns and data requirements of individual agencies working within early childhood.

**Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required w/in the State**

*Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.*

| Types of Programs or Systems | Elements of high-quality health promotion practices | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Health and safety requirements** | **Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up** | **Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits** | **Health literacy** | **Other** |
| **State-funded preschool** *Specify* | X | X | X | X | Vision |
| **Early Head Start and Head Start** | X | X | X | X | Vision, Dental and Hearing Screenings |
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part C** | N/A Part C Services are not provided in a center-based setting | X | X | X | |
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619** | X | X | X | X | Vision |
| **Programs funded under Title I of ESEA** | X | X | X | X | Vision |
| **Programs receiving CCDF funds** | X | | X | | |
| **Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements** *Specified by tier* | Tier I<br>Tier II<br>Tier III<br>Tier IV | | Tier I<br>Tier II<br>Tier III<br>Tier IV | Tier III<br>Tier IV | |
| **State licensing requirements** | X | | X | | |

**Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State**

*Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.*

| Types of Programs or Systems | Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today |
|---|---|
| **State-funded preschool** *Specify:* | All families receive at least two home visits with the first one within 60 days of enrollment. School personnel must collaborate with medical, health, mental health, and social services. They must also provide parent with information about community services and resources. Program staff assists parents in coordinating interagency services for children and families. At least annually, parents are involved in evaluating the program effectiveness. Most schools also have a support system developed through the Family Resource Youth Services Centers (FRYSC) who help coordinate and provide assistance for families. |
| **Early Head Start and Head Start** | Head Start must: Involve parents in program policy-making and operations; Provide parent involvement and education activities responsive to the expressed needs of the parents; Provide opportunities for parents to enhance their parenting skills and understanding of the developmental needs and activities of their children and to share concerns about their children with program staff; Encourage parent involvement in health, nutrition, mental health education; Grantee and delegate agencies must provide medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families; and Provide parent education activities to assist individual families with food preparation and nutritional skills. In 2011the Office of Head Start National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement released the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework which is a set of guidelines for Family Engagement that Head Start grantees use in their work. |
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part C** | Part C is a family-centered system. All children served by Part C receive individualized services in the natural environments with families as the primary focus of the interventions. Services are delivered using a primary service provider who teaches/coaches the family as they embed interventions within their daily routine. Families are integral members of all team meetings and services may address not only child needs but also family needs as related to the child. Part C service coordinators work with families to identify needed resources and supports in the community that may be needed by the family but are not funded by Part C. This ensures that a comprehensive family service plan is implemented. Families participate in family assessment of their concerns and priorities. Families are surveyed annually as a measurement of family outcomes (OSEP report). |

**Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State**

*Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.*

| Types of Programs or Systems | Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today |
|---|---|
| **Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619** | Same as Preschool Above |
| **Programs funded under Title I of ESEA** | 26 Districts have chosen to use Title I funds for pre-school. Same as Preschool Above. |
| **Programs receiving CCDF funds** | A child care program shall provide a daily planned program of activities that offers a variety of activities including the use of electronic viewing or listening devices if the device is discussed with parents prior to viewing or listening. Child Care Programs shall coordinator at least one annual activity involving parental or family participation and post and provide to each parent a copy of children and parent rights, as required by KRS 199.898. |
| **Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements** *Specified by Tier* | *Tier I* – Coordinate at least one annual activity involving parental or family participation. *Tier II* – Coordinate at least two annual activities involving parental or family participation and provide documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement. *Tier III* – Coordinate at least three annual activities involving parental or family participation and document a procedure for use of parental or family feedback. *Tier IV* – Coordinate at least four annual activities involving parental or family participation. |
| **State licensing requirements** | Same as Programs Receiving CCDF Funds Above. |

| Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials[15] currently available in the State | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State** | **If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it?** *(Yes/No/ Not Available)* | **Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential** | | **Notes (if needed)** |
| | | **#** | **%** | |
| **Commonwealth Child Care Credential** | Yes | 1006 | 3.28% | Active credentials for SFY13. (Expires annually, renewed with 15 clock hours) (see below) |
| **Kentucky Early Care and Education Trainer's Credential** | Yes | 704 | 2.29% | Active credentials for SFY13. Valid for three years, can be renewed with 45 clock hours of training. |
| **Director's Credential** | Yes | 1516 | 4.94% | Active credential since 2002 (credential does not expire) |
| **Child Development Associate (CDA)* Family Child Care** | Yes | 137 | 0.45% | Credential not issued by the state, but both college and non-college scholarships are provided to acquire the CDA. |
| **Child Development Associate (CDA)* Infant/Toddler** | Yes | 1214 | 3.95% | Credential not issued by the state, but both college and non-college scholarships are provided to acquire the CDA. |
| **Child Development Associate (CDA)* Preschool** | Yes | 2686 | 8.75% | Credential not issued by the state, but both college and non-college scholarships are provided to acquire the CDA. |

[15] Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

| **Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials[15] currently available in the State** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State** | **If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it?** *(Yes/No/ Not Available)* | **Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential** | | **Notes (if needed)** |
| | | **#** | **%** | |
| **Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (birth to primary) Associates of Applied Science (AAS)** | Yes | 520 | 1.69% | Number of individuals who completed the AAS Degree in Early Childhood Education between the years 2009-2012. |
| **Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (birth to primary) teacher certificate** | Yes | 2936 | 9.56% | Educators who hold the IECE certification which requires a Bachelor's Degree. |
| *Commonwealth Child Care Credential (CCCC) can be obtained three ways: 1) available with a non-college scholarship payable to one of 15 statewide approved training organizations offering the 60 hours of a planned program of instruction 2) articulation agreements with higher education institutions (they determine course work that meets CCCC requirements) 3) Certificate of Eligibility from Secondary institution offering ECE career and technical classes.*<br><br>**CDA credential is administered through the Center of Professional Recognition in Washington DC.*<br><br>*This table reports on credentials that are state issued (and not issued by post secondary institutions). Kentucky chose not to include degrees or credentials awarded by post secondary institutions in this table, because that information is captured in table (A)(1)-(11) which reports on the total number of all available early childhood credentials and degrees awarded by post-secondary institutions in the year 2012.* | | | | |

| Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators | | |
|---|---|---|
| **List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators** | **Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year** | **Does the entity align its programs with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials?** *(Yes/No/ Not Available)* |
| Asbury University | <10* | No** |
| Ashland Community College | 19 | Yes |
| Bellarmine University | <10* | No** |
| Berea College | 14 | No** |
| Big Sandy Technical & Com. College | <10* | Yes |
| Bluegrass Community & Tech. College | 45 | Yes |
| Brescia University | <10* | Yes |
| Campbellsville University | 125 | Yes |
| Eastern KY University | 72 | Yes |
| Elizabethtown Community College | 32 | Yes |
| Gateway Community & Technical College | 33 | Yes |
| Georgetown College | 97 | No** |
| Hazard Community College | 26 | Yes |
| Henderson Community College | 38 | Yes |
| Hopkinsville & Community College | 80 | Yes |
| Jefferson Community College | 43 | Yes |
| Kentucky State University | 22 | Yes |
| Lindsey Wilson College | <10* | No** |
| Madisonville Community College | 18 | Yes |
| Maysville Community College | 23 | Yes |
| Midway College | <10* | No** |
| Morehead State University | 35 | Yes |
| Murray State University | 133 | Yes |
| Northern Kentucky University | <10* | Yes |
| Owensboro Community College | 26 | Yes |
| Somerset Community College | 64 | Yes |
| Southeast Community College | <10* | Yes |
| | | |

| **Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators** | **Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year** | **Does the entity align its programs with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials?** *(Yes/No/ Not Available)* |
| Spalding University | 20 | No** |
| Saint Catherine College | <10* | Yes |
| Union College | 25 | No** |
| University of the Cumberlands | 87 | No** |
| University of Kentucky | 40 | Yes |
| University of Louisville | 41 | Yes |
| Western KY Community & Tech. College | 24 | Yes |
| Western KY University | 112 | Yes |

*This table reports on all available early childhood credentials and degrees awarded in the year 2012 through post secondary institutions. These total numbers for each institution include the following credentials and degrees: General Special Education & Teaching, Education/Teaching of Individuals in Early Childhood Special Education Programs, Pre-Elementary/Early Childhood/Kindergarten Teacher Education, Kindergarten/Preschool Education & Teaching, Early Childhood Education & Teaching, Child Development, and/or Child Care Provider/Assistant.*

**A total number of 1,326 credentials or degrees were awarded in 2012, even though what you see reported here is a total of 1,294. If the number of credentials or degrees from one institution is <10, that number must be redacted according to the regulations that the Council for Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics must follow.*

***Postsecondary institutions that are not aligned with Kentucky's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework cannot participate in our Professional Development Scholarship Fund for the Early Childhood Workforce. However, these institutions still award degrees and credentials to early childhood educators that are recognized by Kentucky's Professional Development Career Lattice.*

| Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment** | **Essential Domains of School Readiness** | | | | |
| | **Language and literacy** | **Cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)** | **Approaches toward learning** | **Physical well-being and motor development** | **Social and emotional development** |
| Domain covered? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Instrument(s) used? *(Specify)* | Brigance Early Childhood Screens III | Brigance Early Childhood Screens III | Brigance Early Childhood Screens III | Brigance Early Childhood Screens III | Brigance Early Childhood Screens III |
| Evidence of validity and reliability? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Evidence of validity for English learners? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| How broadly administered? *(If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)* | Statewide | Statewide | Statewide | Statewide | Statewide |
| Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? *(Y/N)* | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |

| **Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data** | **Essential Data Elements** *Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems* | | | | | | |
| | Unique child identifier | Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier | Unique program site identifier | Child and family demographic information | Early Childhood Educator demographic information | Data on program structure and quality | Child-level program participation and attendance |
| **Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS)** | X | X | X | X | * | * | X |
| **Kentucky Early Childhood Data System (KEDS)** Child Assessment Data | X | | X | X | | | X |
| **TOTS (First Steps Data System)** | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| **National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs (NACCRRA*ware*©) *CCR&R*** | | | X | | | X | X |
| **HANDS Home Visitation Data System** | X | X | X | X | | | X |
| **Early Care Education Training Records Information System (ECE-TRIS)** Child Care Training Data | | X | X | | X | | |
| **Kentucky Integrated Child Care System (KICCS)** Child Care Program Data | X | | X | X | | X | X |
| **Infinite Campus** K-12 Data Including Public Preschool | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| **PD360** K-12 Training Data Including Public Preschool | | | | | | | |
| **In Progress. Agreements with Partner State Agencies have been signed.* | | | | | | | |

## (A)(2) The State's rationale…

A couple of months from now, on a random Tuesday night, Connie Johnson will be folding Maya's favorite t-shirt. From the television on the far wall of her apartment building's laundry mat, she will hear Governor Beshear talking. She will glance up and halfway listen as the anchor narrates something about millions of dollars Kentucky will be receiving. She will smile a bit to herself, tuck the clean Dora the Explorer yard-sale find into her basket, and say to no one in particular, "It may not be worth millions, but my baby's shirt is always clean." The anchor will drone on as Connie digs in her purse for another quarter for the dryer. She will never make the connection of this Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge proposal and her family.

Neither will most families in Kentucky; they have never heard of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, and that's understandable. Like Connie, they are busy working and caring for their children. She is deciding whether to pay the rent or replace the bald tires on her 10-year-old car, whether to take the extra Friday night shift and the $125 it will bring or spend a quiet night at home with a Disney movie and her two munchkins. Connie is not worried about whether Miss Anita's early care program is any good; after all, it is licensed, right?

Each early learning and development program will be required to post a 12" x 18" poster at its front entrance and in a prominent location within its facility. The posters, to be designed, will prominently feature the program's STARS rating.

Right. It is licensed. But what Connie doesn't know is that licensure is a mandatory minimum, not proof of a high quality early learning environment. As it happens, Maya is eligible for free public preschool, Head Start, and the child care assistance used for Miss Anita's home-based program. But Connie remains unaware. And if she was aware, she would have to decide which of the three options might be best for Maya (and later for Knox), Connie would have to compare **three separate types of rating systems**, each of which use a separate set of valid quality indicators. It is enough to confuse a professional early care provider, let alone a hard-working Mom with a CNA certificate in nursing.

Knowing that, we also know this: The only way a tiered quality rating system can be **meaningful** is if we first are able

to rate all programs on the same standard for quality, and second, make the quality indicators clear, visible and easily understood. Requiring programs to **display their rating** will give every parent an objective way to assess the relative quality of a program. For example, in Louisville, all restaurants are now required to post in their window in a specific and visible location their most recent rating by the health department. While a high enough rating may not make a consumer change his/her mind about whether to walk in for a juicy burger, a **low rating** will certainly cause one to consider other options. So too will families notice, suddenly becoming aware their children attend early learning and development programs with a low STAR rating (< 3 Stars). That is our rationale, as further demonstrated in the following if / then statement:

**Our rationale**

**If…** we require all early learning and development programs to participate in a family-friendly, high-quality rating system with unmistakable levels of quality,

**and…** we directly support early childhood educators, providing them the ongoing coaching and support they need to improve the quality of their programs,

**then…** we will see an increase in the number of children – especially Children with High Needs – who have access to and participate in high-quality early learning programs,

**which will…** result in an increase in the number of children who are kindergarten ready.

**(A)(2)(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving quality, outcomes, closing gaps**

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood has worked with stakeholders, other government agencies, and early childhood advocates in the development and design of Kentucky All★STARS. Together we are working to ensure all Kentucky children enter kindergarten ready, that is, Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn and Ready to Succeed.

| Our Purpose: All children enter kindergarten ready – Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn and Ready to Succeed | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Goals / Objectives** | **Measurements** | **Indicators/Benchmarks** |
| **Goal #1: Improve Kentucky's programs for early childhood development** | | |
| **1.1** By 2017, we will expand Kentucky's quality tier rating system (STARS for KIDS NOW) to encompass 100% of all childcare, preschool and Head Start Centers. Specifically, we will see:<br>• an increase from < 20% to 100% of all early childhood programs (public preschool, Head Start, private childcare and preschool) that participate in the Kentucky TQRIS/STARS by 2017 as compared to the 2013 baseline. | Specific measures to meet include (at a minimum):<br>✓ # of centers/programs at each tier/STAR level as compared to 2013 baseline<br>✓ # of centers/programs that increase by a tier/STAR level annually<br>✓ activities and strategies that demonstrate higher effect[1]:<br>– in each type of center and program; and<br>– in each subpopulation (rural, poverty, age, community type, etc.)<br>*[1]As observed by our 3rd-party eval.* | ☐ Types of centers/prgrms<br>☐ Workgroup meetings (#, quality)<br>☐ Workgroup action steps<br>☐ Policy changes required for outcomes<br>☐ Data system integration<br>☐ Incentives paid (CCAP)<br>☐ # of tier-specific workshops held for center, PreK, Head Start staff members<br>☐ Monitoring STAR applications, improvement objectives<br>☐ Early Learning Improvement Plans (#, quality, effectiveness) |
| **1.2** As the redesigned STARS system is implemented, we will see an increase in the number of high-quality centers/programs in Kentucky as compared to the 2013 baseline, including:<br>• 33% of the total number of Head Start programs will be in the top 3 TQRIS/STARS levels by 2017<br>• 60% of the total number of public preschool and Head Start programs will be either a 4 or 5 Star program on the TQRIS/STARS system by 2017<br>• 45% of the total number of licensed (non Head Start) programs will be in the top 3 TQRIS/Stars by 2017 | | |
| **Goals / Objectives** | **Measurements** | **Indicators/Benchmarks** |
| **Goal #2: Improve child outcomes for our youngest Kentuckians** | | |
| **2.1** Increase the # of children who participate daily in classrooms with high-quality environments, as seen in the pre/post measures of environment, including adult-child interact- ions. Measurements will include annual increases beginning 2016. | Measures will include existing and new tools to be outlined within the new TQRIS ratings | ☐ Early Learning Improvement Plans aligned to weaknesses in assessments |

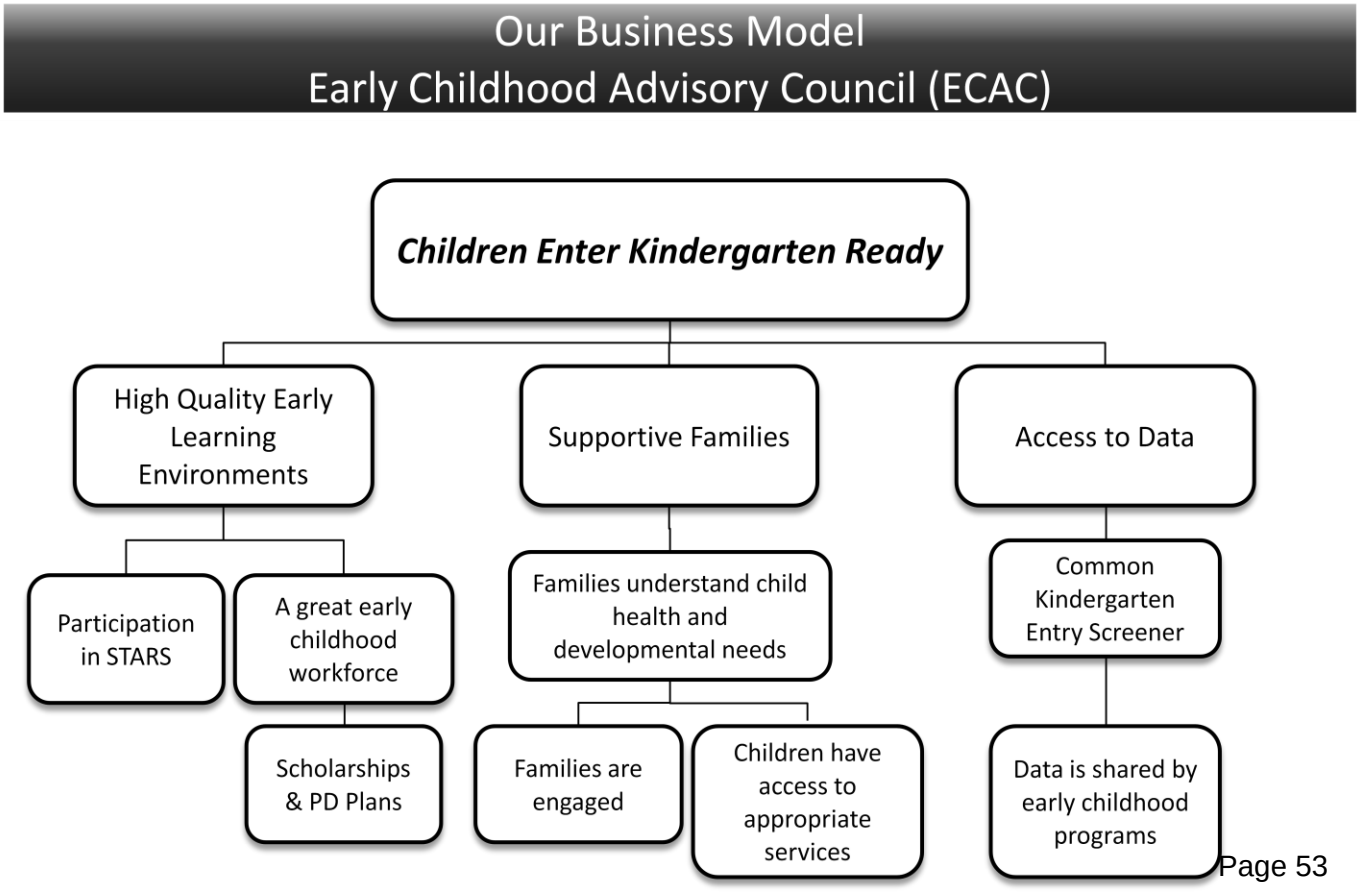
| Goals / Objectives | | Measurements | Indicators/Benchmarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2.2** | Increase the number of Kentucky children who are kindergarten ready annually, beginning in 2015, as compared to the pre-RTT-ELC baseline of 28% (2012 pilot). This will include:<br>• An increase of 25% in the number of children who are Ready or Ready with Enrichments on the Brigance Screen for Kindergarten Readiness now required for all young children as they enter a public kindergarten.<br>• An increase of 35% in the number of High-Need children, as defined in our proposal, who are Ready or Ready with Enrichments on the Brigance Screen for Kindergarten Readiness now required for all young children as they enter a public kindergarten. | Specific measures include the Brigance Screen for Kindergarten, including the number of students who are:<br>✓ Ready with Enrichments<br>✓ Ready<br>✓ Not Ready<br>Measures will also be analyzed by demographics (age, poverty, rural, type of center/program, dosage, and, where available, mother's level of education) | ☐ Types of centers/prgrms<br>☐ Average dosage (the number of days/hours of attendance by child and center type)<br>☐ # of young children screened (Brigance)<br>☐ Outreach for Pre-K registration, screening<br>☐ # and quality of professional learning sessions for staff members on adult-child interactions<br>☐ # of reliable raters to administer environmental rating<br>☐ Focus groups, interviews held by evaluator<br>☐ Site visits by evaluator, program staff, RTCs |
| **2.3** | Increase the number of Kentucky children who have acquired an appropriate level of **communication** and **language skills** over the 2012 pilot. This will include:<br>• an increase of 25% in the number of children who perform at Average/Above Average on the Language/Communication indicator of the Brigance Screen for Kindergarten Readiness (< 40% in 2012)<br>• an increase of 40% in the number of high-need children who perform at the Average/Above Average on the Language / Communication indicator of the Brigance Screen for Kindergarten Readiness (< 27% in 2012) | Specific measures include the number of young children meeting the Brigance measures for communication, language<br>✓ All students (statewide)<br>✓ Low-income students<br>✓ Rural students | |
| **2.4** | Annually increase the quality of the alignment of professional learning to the specific needs of childcare, preschool and Head Start center staffs, as noted by the expanded TQRIS and compared to a spring 2014 baseline. | Measures will be designed by the evaluator and based on:<br>✓ center Early Learning Improvement Plans<br>✓ types, # of professional learning sessions attended | |

| Objectives | | Measurements | Indicators/Benchmarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal #3: Begin to close kindergarten readiness gaps among our youngest Kentuckians** | | | |
| **3.1** | Improve the abilities of low-income (200% of poverty) and rural families to transition their kids successfully to kindergarten:<br>as noted in data for kindergarten-readiness (above)<br>• as compared to spring 2015 baseline surveys related to the Toyota bornlearning Academies<br>• as compared to spring 2015 baseline surveys related to the Strengthening Families framework<br>• as noted through an evaluator-designed pre/post survey for kindergarten teachers and instructional aides, conducted annually | Specific measures to meet include (at a minimum):<br>✓ self-assessments through the Strengthening Families framework<br>✓ surveys of preschool teachers and aides in public kindergartens<br>✓ Toyota bornlearning Academy pre/post measures and surveys (annual & summative) | ☐ # of staff, partners trained in Strengthening Families framework<br>☐ # of parents attending bornlearning Acad.<br>☐ Analysis of mother's education levels (sample collected annually)<br>☐ Surveys, outcomes from learning sessions<br>☐ Staff registration for postsec. coursework<br>☐High school CDA program participation<br>☐Focus groups, interviews held by evaluator<br>☐# of positive indicators (e.g., increased trust, organizational learning; eval. survey)<br>☐Attendance rates<br>☐ Scholarships provided to center staff members<br>☐CECCs include HS, school districts, child care |
| **3.2** | As above (2.3), increase the number of Kentucky children who participate daily in classrooms with high-quality environments, as seen in the pre/post measures of environment, including adult-child interactions. Measurements will include annual increases beginning 2015. | Measures will include existing and new tools to be outlined within the new TQRIS ratings. Existing $P^2R$ and Triennial reviews will be used (Pre-K; Head Start) | |
| **3.4** | Increase to 100% by 2016 the number of public elementary schools that have in place a Kindergarten Readiness Plan as required by the Kentucky Department of Education. In addition:<br>• by 2015, at least 25% of all early care and development programs will report they work w/local elementary schools to support their plan<br>• by 2017, at least 80% of all early care and development programs will report they work w/local elementary schools to support their plan | ✓ # of plans in place<br>✓ Childcare, preschool and Head Start director reports and surveys (evaluator designed)<br>✓ Professional learning surveys (pre/post)<br>✓ Elementary school survey (pre/post) | |

## (A)(2)(b) Summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates … an effective reform agenda

Kentucky has been a leader in early care and development improvement. On previous pages, we have presented the history of our work – evidence of the Commonwealth's work to improve the early learning and development environments for all children and, in particular, Children with High Needs, to ensure all children in the Commonwealth have access to high-quality early care and development environments. KIDS NOW is a whole-child approach to early learning and development approved in 2000 by a unanimous vote of both houses of the Kentucky General Assembly. Since that time, we have been working to implement improvements at every level.

In 2011, the newly-authorized Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) rolled out its **business model**, seen in the graphic below. Our reform agenda – outlined beginning on page 7- has been part of Kentucky's commitment to young children since 1990; implementation of Kentucky All★STARS complements and completes our ongoing work. The three foundational blocks of our work – High Quality Early Learning, Supportive Families, Access to Data – are outlined on the following page.

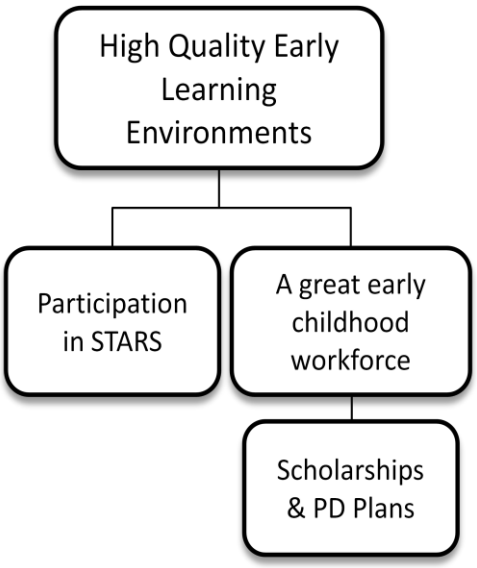


**Also see Section B**

**High Quality Early Learning Environments**

– **Increasing participation in STARS**

Through All★STARS, we will shift the current system **from optional to mandatory** for all public preschool, Head Start, and early learning and development programs, ensuring each program with two or more non-related children 1) meets a minimum level of quality and 2) continues to improve annually via a **customized path to improvement**. This will be accomplished through a year-long redesign of the STARS levels followed by the forwarding of legislation to link our expanded TQRIS system to licensing requirements. We take this step – to mandate participation in the STARS system – because our history indicates wholesale changes are more fully effected when they are the new norm, not just something nice to do. Kentucky's General Assembly, as mentioned above, has yet to decline a request related to services for young children.




Therefore, by 2016, no provider in the Commonwealth will receive a license to operate without first qualifying through the redesigned STARS system. In addition, STARS will require each program to participate in ongoing improvement strategies to reach the next level of quality; providers of every type will receive support through professional development, ongoing coaching and other supports, outlined below and on page 91.

To be clear, the GOEC will keep the process **as simple as possible for providers**, creating three specific, parallel tracks – one track for each type of provider, built around the unique requirements of each. For example, Head Start programs already participate in a triennial review process that includes on-site reviews by a federal monitoring team as well as specific assessments of environmental quality and classroom interactions. The STARS Redesign Workgroup will design a crosswalk specific to Head Start programs (and preschools, and childcare programs) that will allow the GOEC to complete the STARS rating grid of requirements specific to each type of provider. We have

included a description of the redesign process and an example grid on pages 103-104. Each type of early learning and development program – public preschool, Head Start, and home or center-based childcare programs – will have a distinct set of requirements to demonstrate their level of quality.

This will quickly increase the number of high-quality programs participating in the STARS rating system; an initial review of preschool and Head Start programs indicates most will likely be rated at a 3 Star level or higher under the current 4-star system. As more thoroughly outlined on page 91, currently, just 40 percent of our childcare programs participate in the voluntary STARS system; preschools and Head Starts are not licensed and typically do not participate. By eliminating the voluntary nature of the current rating system **and** redesigning the STARS levels to better include the individual quality measures already used by our three types of programs, we will easily more than double the number of programs in the system by 2017, going from 899 programs in 2012 to an estimated 3663 - thereby more than doubling the number of Children with High Needs being served in high-quality early learning and development programs.

**Also see Section D**

- **A great early childhood workforce**

Increasing the knowledge and qualifications of early care educators has been a KIDS NOW focus since the initiative's early days. Our research supports this strategy by demonstrating a strong correlation between teacher educational attainment and children's developmental progress. According to our 2012 Early Care and Education Evaluation conducted by the University of Kentucky, "Teacher education level has consistently been associated with positive child outcomes in Kentucky's evaluation of early care and education. Administrators should support teachers to gain higher education levels and create work environments that encourage teachers to remain in the field of early care and education. Evaluation results suggest that teachers with more experience engage in teaching behaviors linked to positive child outcomes." (Grisham-Brown, 2012)

Kentucky provides scholarships for college and non-college credit-bearing coursework as well as professional development for early childhood educators regardless of the individual's place on the knowledge and qualifications continuum. Incentives provided through the Division of Child Care support programs in hiring more educated staff and existing staff in

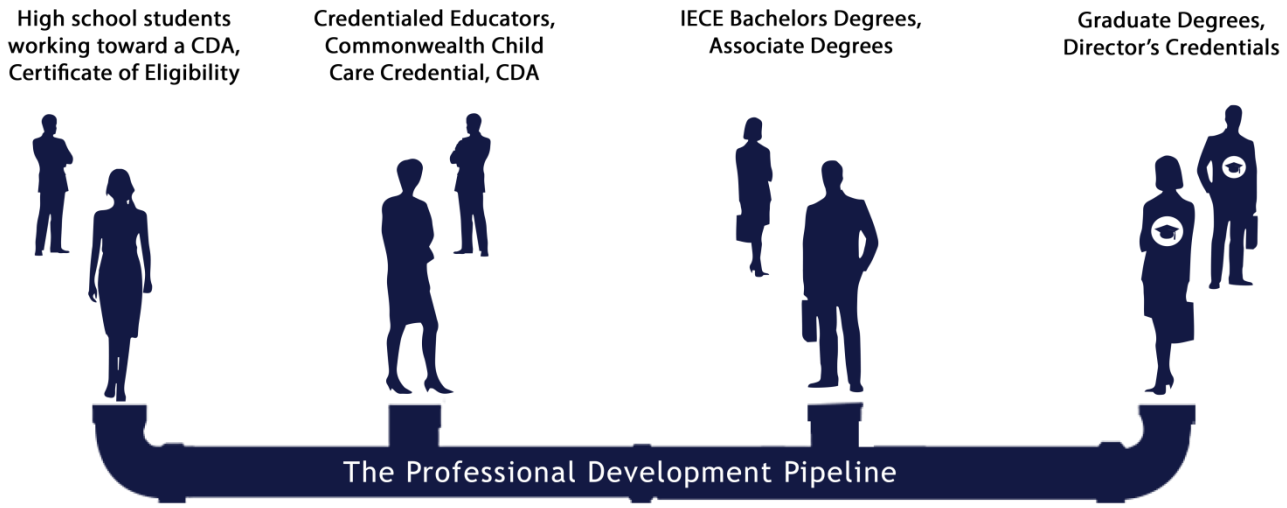
accessing educational opportunities. A system of regional **Professional Development Counselors** helps aspiring students enroll in the scholarship program, craft a Professional Development Plan, and continually move forward through a seamless system of learning. Early care educators, working with their Counselors and PD Plans, more readily navigate the coursework, credentialing, and financial aid systems; all early care educators are required to have 15 to 18 hours of professional development annually, depending on the type of early care program (15 hours for childcare classrooms and Head Start; 18 hours for public preschool).

As we implement Kentucky All★STARS, the PD Workgroup will also continue to streamline our PD offerings. Currently, half-a-dozen organizations in the state might provide the same exact training but to a single type of audience; as we identify specific needs related to families and learning environments, we will provide training models or prototypes that can be delivered by multiple qualified trainers from any of our partnering agencies to any of our early care providers. For example, a Regional Training Center (RTC) that serves public preschools in Western Kentucky would also provide training to early learning and development programs and Head Starts. As part of this process, the GOEC and other stakeholder agencies and advocates are joining together to host Kentucky's first-ever unified conference on school readiness. Set for June 16-18, 2014, the conference will include all early childhood sectors (public and private) as well as intervention specialists and other professionals who work with families and young children. The conference is one strategy the GOEC will utilize to begin building a sense that early learning and development is a single community working on behalf of children and families.

The KIDS NOW scholarship program provides financial assistance for college and non-college professional development. Articulation agreements are in place to enable early care educators to transfer credits to and between Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). Non-college classes are provided through the Division of Child Care in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services; college scholarships are administered through the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority. These funds assist early care and education personnel in moving through a credentialing system that begins at entry level and proceeds through post-secondary education. Since 2000, more than 18,000 college scholarships and 7,000 non-college scholarships have been awarded, totaling more than $11.5 million invested in these educators. Since 2010, our scholarship information campaign has helped us award 100

percent of the budgeted scholarship funds annually; requests exceed available funds annually.

In addition to traditional paths to careers in early care and development, Kentucky has **expanded the workforce pipeline** by embedding requirements for state and nationally recognized credentials in public high schools: the nationally-recognized Child Development Associate credential (CDA) and a Certificate of Eligibility for Kentucky's Commonwealth Child Care Credential may both be achieved by the senior year of high school. Thousands of dollars will be saved in professional development costs as high school Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Early Childhood classes are integrated into our Early Childhood Career Lattice FCS students will be prepared to go right to work in early childhood programs and, once employed, will be eligible for all of the system of supports, including scholarships.



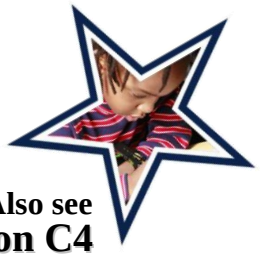

As we implement Kentucky All★STARS and look to expand our workforce even further, we will also simplify/unify our Professional Development Registry (p 191). Currently, the PD Registry only captures training information on individuals working in early childcare programs and the licensed Head Starts; data for public preschool and school-based Head Start early child educators is housed within the Kentucky Department of Education. As part of Kentucky All★STARS, we will create an interface between the current KDE system and the expanded STARS system. This will allow individuals, employers, PD Counselors, and others to determine the qualifications of individuals, develop plans for improvement, and make smart staffing decisions (i.e., at least 50 percent of staff hold a CDA).

An expanded and comprehensive registry will also allow the GOEC to work with other state agencies as they seek to recruit potential and existing early childhood educators to meet anticipated demand. For example, as we increase the number of early learning and development programs seeking 3 and 4 STARS ratings, we anticipate there will be a greater demand for professionalized staff members; currently, to achieve a 3 STARS rating:

- at least 50 percent of staff, including substitutes, must have a Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher;
- the Director must receive at least 24 hours of appropriate training per year; and
- during 75 percent of program hours, the director or person responsible must have a CDA or higher.

While the STARS Redesign Workgroup will continue to clarify the requirements for each rating level as we move forward, it is clear we will **need to be prepared for increased demand** for credentialed early childhood educators. The unified registry will allow us to more quickly identify trends in hiring and availability of professionally-prepared educators in the workforce.

**Supportive Families**



**Also see Section C4**

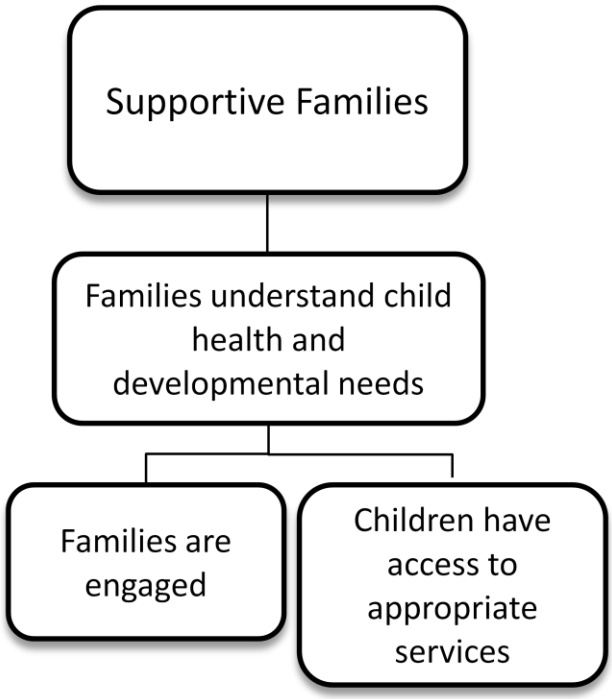
- **Families understand child health and developmental needs**

  Through Kentucky All★STARS, we will implement two new strategies statewide to help families better understand the needs of their young child. Both are research-based and have a history of producing positive results for low-income families.

  Strengthening Families Approach and the Protective Factors Framework

  We will adopt the Strengthening Families strength-based framework of Protective Factors throughout all systems and support networks, working with more than a dozen public and private partners and stakeholder groups for full implementation. The five protective factors – Parent Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Concrete Supports in Times of Need, and Social and Emotional Competence of Children – build family strengths and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development.

Strengthening Families will help **connect available resource providers** to parents in need – as seen through the eyes of those early childhood educators each day. Personnel in our early learning and development programs will learn to be intentional in facilitating friendships with parents and recognize signs of family stress as they care for each family's children. They will reduce the social isolation some parents feel and help develop within the community a set of positive parenting norms.




The GOEC will work with a myriad of partners to integrate the framework not only in the Kentucky All★STARS project implementation, but in our overall work and within the work of those partner groups. For example, only two or three of the five protective factors – social and emotional competence of children, knowledge of parenting and child development, and perhaps parent social connections – are really addressed as early childhood educators work with children and families. Leadership Team Partners, listed below, also have agreed to integrate the framework into the services they provide. Therefore, families will

**Leadership Team Partners: Integrating Protective Factors**

- Governor's Office of Early Childhood
- Department of Maternal & Child Health
- Division of Protection and Permanency
- Department of Behavioral Health
- HANDS Home Visiting
- First Steps Early Intervention (Part C of IDEA)
- Division of Child Care
- Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky
- Metro United Way
- Family Resources Centers (FRYSCs)
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Children, Inc.
- Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- Department of Public Health
- Head Start State Collaboration Office

Each agency has agreed to integrate the Protective Factors Framework into the services they currently provide to low-income families. This will ensure **all areas** of the framework are addressed throughout the year.

receive the **supports they need at multiple levels and from multiple providers** in a seamless manner.

Strengthening Families uses the leverage of multiple implementations/integrations to build the protective factors of families. Again, it provides multiple touch-points of services to support families. For example, an early childhood educator, who provides a twice-a-day social connection to caregivers and parents may connect a weary first-time mom with the HANDS Home Visiting program and the Department of Maternal and Child Health; the educator may also contact the local Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) who will contact additional, local support providers for help, providing the specific support structure that family needs. Each of the agencies – which will now include a trained group of child and family advocates – will help integrate the Protective Factors. This will create a statewide cross-sector network of agencies and organizations serving families that conscientiously and consistently work to build the five protective factors in families, particularly families with High Needs.

In the first Year of Kentucky All★STARS, we will build the capacity within the GOEC, hiring a Project Director to coordinate the needed training and to build a community network. The Director will work with the GOEC staff to train leadership, put in place measurement systems, and begin to catalog resources in each area. To be clear, the Director will develop with leadership a training system to implement statewide with the CECCs who will, in Year 2, begin training Early Childhood Educators and others in each CECCs region. The Director will work with CECCs to begin mapping the state system of providers and supports they regularly provide for families, particularly families with young children.

By Year 3, we will create Parent Advisory Councils through the Parent Leadership Learning Collaborative in each local community; continue local level training; embed the process in each Regional Interagency Council (RIAC); and train Parent Café Facilitators, a specific strategy within Strengthening Families to ensure sustainability. By Year 4, we will ensure delivery systems are fully integrated and sustainable, making any course corrections as needed.

Toyota bornlearning® Academies

Toyota bornlearning® Academies are comfortable, friendly workshops for low-income families with young children, held at the local elementary school. Toyota bornlearning®

Academies help families prepare their child for kindergarten entry by providing information about what it means to be ready for kindergarten and by offering easy-to-apply strategies to use at home in those early years. In the process, families **form a relationship with the school**, helping smooth the transition to kindergarten and later grades.

Toyota bornlearning® Academies create **long-lasting relationships between families and the K-6 schoolhouse.** When families are engaged in positive interactions in the school setting before school even begins, they are more likely to feel welcomed and remain engaged throughout their child's educational experience. Research shows the earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effect (Cotton, 1989; Desforges, 2003).

That is the purpose of Toyota bornlearning® Academies: to engage families with the school system in the earliest years of their child's education by offering them strategies they can use at home to maximize their child's early learning and development. The intentional placement of a school setting allows for families and children to gain insight and a level of comfort needed to transition to that school setting. This is also an opportunity for school leaders to get to know the family and their needs – all leading to long-standing and positive parent-teacher relationships.

Academies were inspired by The Harlem Children's Zone in New York, with the idea of creating parent workshop series for families, to set children on the right track for learning as early as possible. A curriculum, training guide and supplemental materials were developed by United Way of Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky based on existing research-based materials created by United Way Worldwide, The Ad Council and the Families and Work Institute.

The pilot Toyota bornlearning® Academies was implemented in Kentucky as a public-private partnership between United Way and Kenton County Schools, and experienced overwhelming success in the 10 initial elementary schools. The program has been highlighted by United Way Worldwide as a best practice. In 2012, a statewide partnership, including the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, cultivated and secured funding from Toyota and expanded Academies to schools in various districts statewide. Toyota has made a 5-year commitment that will result in $1 million invested in Toyota bornlearning®

Academies across the state of Kentucky, with at least 10 additional schools added each year through 2016.

Kentucky All★STARS will work with Toyota bornlearning® Academies to expand that reach to 150 more elementary schools over 4 years. Importantly, we will utilize Family Resource & Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs), which work in every High Need elementary school in the Commonwealth, to implement the initiative. Through a gradual release model, our project staff will work with FRYSC staff to model the implementation of the Academies; the underlying intent of the state-wide expansion is the **full integration** into Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSC) core grant components within five years.

To be clear, the Academies align perfectly with the work of Kentucky's FRYSCs; already, we have established agreements statewide that will allow us to provide the training and support to all FRYSC staff over the four-year RTT-ELC project. The Toyota bornlearning® Academies, in fact, will support FRYSCs as they address one of the core components in their mission – Families in Training, which include home visits and group meetings. Over the years, it is this program component that local FRYSCs have struggled to provide; yet with only 28-percent of children ready for kindergarten, this integration effort will **connect the dots**, reaching families early to both connect them to the public schoolhouse and help to increase school readiness among their children.

FRYSCs were established in 1990 as a component of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) to help students succeed in school by helping to minimize or eliminate non-cognitive barriers to education. FRYSC's are strengthened by community partnerships in their ability to provide programs, services and referrals to families that are critical in promoting early learning and successful transition to school.

**Academy family-friendly format**

- Greeting & Dinner
- Transition to Child Care
- Activity to introduce the topic for the week
- Pre-Survey
- Mini lecture
- Activity that exemplifies the mini lecture topic/focus
- Hands on practice of Toyota bornlearning® Academy skills
- Post-Survey
- Families practice new skills together

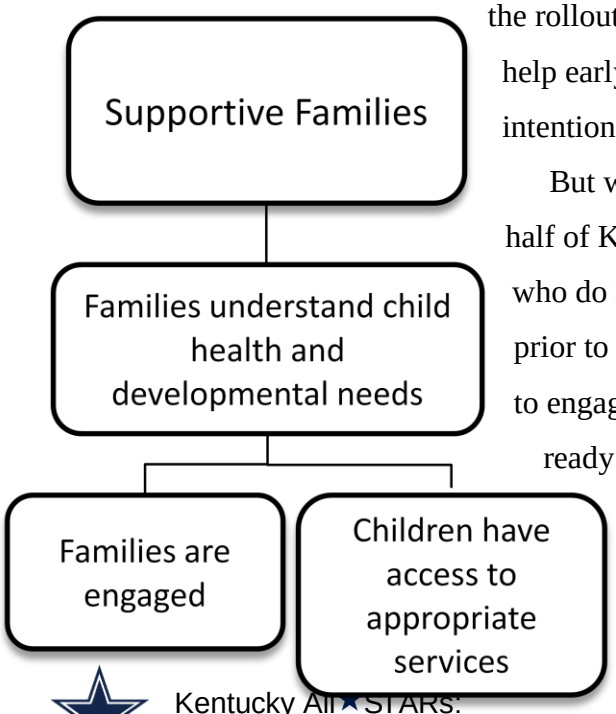
The Academy includes a series of six inter-related workshops presented in a family-friendly format: 1) Series Overview, 2) How Children Learn, 3) Nutrition & Health, 4) Routines & Learning on

the Go, 5) Ready to Read: Building Your Child's Language Skills, and 6) Building Relationships. Key to getting families involved is the provision of dinner (provided in-kind by partner groups) and child care.

By Year 4, we anticipate 200 elementary schools will be hosting the Toyota bornlearning® Academies annually; through our gradual release model, FRYSCs are ready to take the initiative statewide.

- **Families are engaged**

In 2011, the Division of Childcare, as part of a Child Trends assessment, conducted a survey with familes and discovered a gap in its own outreach. Through Kentucky All★STARS, we will expand upon our current efforts to engage families. Currently, there are perhaps a dozen touch-points of support for low-income families in most Kentucky communities, including the local health department, the SNAP office (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as food stamps), and various other health, food and assistance agencies funded by local, state or federal agencies. However, the early childhood educator is the one constant, recurring touch-point for low-income families with children. Because there are no school buses going to and from many local programs, parents and caregivers see their child's teacher or teachers **twice each day**. Similarly, these teachers see parents and caregivers twice each day, providing a critical opportunity for communication and support. Working with early childhood educators and center directors in required professional development and in the rollout of the expanded STARS rating system, we will help early learning and development programs be more intentional about their work with families.




But we have not yet reached the families of as many as half of Kentucky children under age five – those families who do not attend any organized early education program prior to attending kindergarten. That means our commitment to engaging families and preparing children to be school ready requires us to go beyond improving early care programs. We must develop strategies that help **every family, parent and caregiver** understand the importance of their role as their child's first

and best teacher. The Community Engagement Work Group of the Early Childhood Advisory Council is working on different initiatives to help families become aware of the many ways they help their children develop through day-to-day talking, playing and reading including:

- **Parent Guides**: parent publication that outlines behaviors to help children reach developmental milestones (page 155 for examples; also attached in the Appendix).
- **Monthly Messages**: monthly newsletter for families that explores topics such as the Kentucky school readiness definition.
- **Newsletters for early childhood partners:** covering topics such as developing Community Early Childhood Councils (CECC), increased awareness of early childhood professional development and best practices for preschool and head start programs.
- **Website:** A more robust website and social media presence, including a focus on tracking data.

Through deliberate efforts, the GOEC has worked for the past two years to speak with one voice to families and the early childhood community, using an intentional, accessible and straightforward manner. The GOEC offers a variety of tools and materials to inform families and communities about the importance of early care and education. This includes a toolkit provided to local Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) with individualized logos, press releases and announcement templates, flyer templates for marketing community events and informational webinars. These tools are designed to help the CECCs bolster communication within their communities. The GOEC provides grants to CECCs and, for the first time, required each 2014 grant proposal to create a community communication plan. Other tools produced by the GOEC for the early childhood community, include the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards and the Kentucky Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide. Both are developed and approved by the ECAC and then distributed for use.

In particular, the GOEC website provides a wide variety of resources for families and communities. Families can find information about quality childcare, the Kentucky school readiness definition, local CECC contact information, local early childhood profiles and more. The release of our Monthly Messages, newsletters and social media presence have created an increase of traffic over the past year, as seen in **nearly three times the number of hits and visits**. For January 2013, our monthly total web hits was of 4,876, and we averaged

157 visits a day, compared to 13,299 hits and an average of 443 visits a day in September 2013. The website experiences a spike in visits after a newsletter or Monthly Message release; in September, the GOEC had its highest daily visitors with 896 hits on Sept. 25, the same day the September Monthly Message, featuring everyday science, was released.

- **Children have access to appropriate services.**

  We cannot state more firmly how strong and practical our relationships are with multiple Kentucky agencies, regional support structures and local providers. As and demonstrated in the Appendix (letters), the Governor's Office of Early Childhood leverages a number of other agencies and programs for the benefit of our young children and their families. It has been our charge from Governor Beshear to reach **all children**, particularly Children of High Need within the Commonwealth. The following services – outlined here – are but a few currently available; the GOEC works with local agencies to communicate resources, as noted throughout this proposal.

  - A Folic acid campaign which provides counseling and/or supplements to 75,000 mothers in Kentucky annually, reducing infant neural tube defects by 27 percent from 2000-07;
  - A substance abuse treatment program for pregnant and post-partum women currently serving more than 1,000 individuals;
  - An immunization program for under-insured children, with over 40,000 children immunized to date;
  - An Oral Health Education and Prevention Program with oral health screenings and fluoride applications provided to over 200,000 children to date,
  - Universal newborn hearing tests, which are currently screening 99 percent of children born in Kentucky annually;
  - Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS), a voluntary home visitation program for new and expectant parents currently serving more than 11,000 families with more than 150,000 home visits annually. For more information, see page 168.
  - An Early Childhood Mental Health program, which provides direct interventions and works to keep children at risk of expulsion enrolled in the child care program.

- Child Advocacy Centers for children who have been sexually abused. The goal of these centers is to mitigate the physical and mental health impact of sexual abuse on affected children.
- The First Steps program which provides services each year to over 12,000 children with developmental disabilities from birth to age 3 and their families. First Steps is Kentucky's response to Part C of the IDEA Act. First Steps offers comprehensive services through a variety of community agencies and service disciplines. Participating children experience significant improvement in development and learning, and services and support for families help reduce stress.
- The Healthy Start in Child Care Health Consultation program provides consultation on child health, safety, nutrition, and social/emotional well-being to child care providers. Consultants include Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and Health Educators who consult with child care providers and families to promote healthy, safe, and nurturing environments for optimal child development.

Perhaps the most important family engagement and linkage tool for Kentucky All★STARS is our statewide network of local **Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs)**. In thinking about our families – and individuals like Connie Johnson – we must work locally. And the CECCs are a key strategy in increasing collaboration and improving local implementation in our work plan. They are the GOEC's boots on the ground and will carry forth the vision for Kentucky All★STARS.

CECCs were originally established as part of the KIDS Now legislation and have been funded at about $1 million annually since 2001. CECCs are existing community service agencies who have applied for and received state grant funding to serve in that service capacity. The competitive grant process is administered by the GOEC annually and provides the GOEC an opportunity to determine specific requirements or areas of focus each year. In 2011, the GOEC adjusted the RFP to include a **greater focus on parent and family engagement**. In fact, for the last two years, the CECCs have focused their efforts firmly within the three domains of the GOEC business model (above; p. 53).

Simply put, CECCs are our **agents for change in nearly every county in Kentucky**. They can bring together diverse members of their local community and mobilize them to work in concert, to achieve community level improvements in kindergarten readiness. Prior

to 2011, CECCs were largely been focused on improving early childhood settings, increasing participation in the STARS for KIDS NOW rating system and offering professional development opportunities to improve the early care and education workforce. CECCs worked closely with local childcare programs to get them to enter STARS rating system, mainly through distribution of mini grants and training. CECCs also comprised of **[illegible] representatives** who work together to promote school readiness in their local communit[illegible]. For example, CECCs were key in the distribution and implementation of the School Readiness Definition (p.35). At the local level, CECCs were able to put this document into the hands of parents, families and communities, enabling the message of School Readiness to be broadly available to the entire early childhood community.

CECCs are well positioned to mobilize community partners, families, and early childhood educators to implement strategies within Kentucky All★STARS. Funding for these groups in 2014 was increased to $1.4 million; in addition, the number of council members across Kentucky remains strong. For the coming year, there are 1,362 CECCs members statewide, for an average of 18 members per local council. To ensure collaboration, each CECC is mandated to have at least one representative from Head Start, public preschool, and local childcare, and must have at least seven members to conduct the ongoing business. In addition, interest across sectors has expanded over the last two years; local stakeholders are participating at greater rates. It is not unusual to find local business leaders, parents, foster parents, librarians, and social service workers from the Department for Community Based Services such as social workers, office of food stamp employees, Cooperative Extension Agents and others as major players on the local council.

Perhaps the most important family engagement and linkage tool for Kentucky All★STARS is our statewide network of local Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs). They are our **boots on the ground** and will carry forth the vision for Kentucky All★STARS to Connie Johnson and her contemporaries.

While we are pleased about expanding the geographic reach of the CECCs and increasing levels of funding committed by the Commonwealth annually, it is also our intent to continue to build the capacity and effectiveness of each individual council. Specifically, we are focused on building CECC's ability to:

- **Share a Common Mission.** Focused on the common agenda of increasing the number of children who arrive at kindergarten "ready to grow, ready to learn, and ready to succeed."
- **Measure Outcomes**. Their effectiveness will be measured over time by the common kindergarten readiness screening (across 5 domains) of every child in their community, regardless of the child's prior experiences, beginning in 2013. Their proposals must demonstrate that their local plan of action includes a closely related set of mutually reinforcing activities clearly linked to the agenda of the GOEC.
- **Communicate Broadly**. CECCs bring all the partners to the community table on a monthly or quarterly basis to communicate progress, plan and evaluate their results. In most communities, CECCs have been convening for more than a decade to do this work collectively. We are now asking CECCs to broadly share monthly messages around kindergarten readiness and early childhood development.
- **Provide Leadership**. CECCs, as independent community planning bodies, provide the backbone support for the kindergarten readiness work of their community. While many do not have dedicated staff, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood has involved CECC leadership in plan development and capacity building to build those skills as well.

CECCs also provide localized training opportunities for early childhood educators, who must receive at least 15 hours of training annually. Many CECCs offer "Super Saturdays" to better accommodate the schedules of early learning and development program staff members. These day-long sessions are often offered at little to no cost to the professionals and are on various topics in early childhood. CECCs hold a variety of local events to bring families and children together, including literacy days with free materials and fun activities; Community Baby Showers to provide infant resources at no cost to families; and Back to School Events that will provide families books and other school related materials.

During events and as they provide other services, CECCs continue to ensure a broad understanding of the established School Readiness definition. To do this, CECCs distribute resources and publications provided by the GOEC including the Kindergarten Readiness Definition (Appendix) and age-appropriate Parent Guides (Appendix).

In February, as the new early childhood data for kindergarten readiness is released, CECCs will be the main avenue for delivering information to help families, educators and communities understand. Similarly, CECCs were asked to use the newly released Early

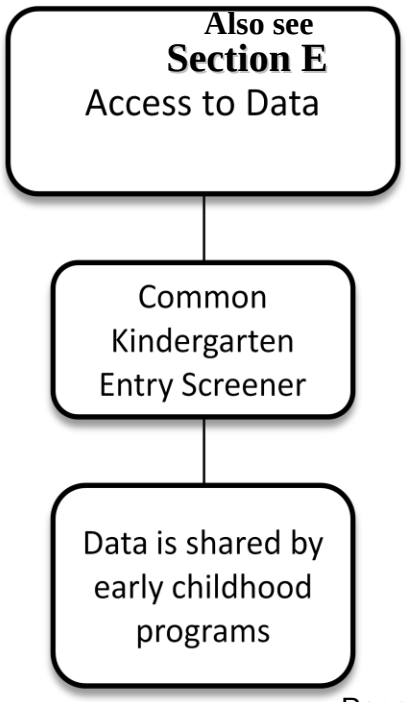
Childhood Profiles (example provided, Appendix) in determining the needs of their communities and to ensure all stakeholders are aware and understand the data located in the Profile. Through several webinars and face-to-face trainings, the GOEC worked with CECCs, supporting them in the use of the Profiles and its local data; the Profile is a new tool that is being used this fall as CECCs develop their local community plans for Kindergarten Readiness. In addition, CECCs will be distributing the local Profiles throughout their communities to make the case for community level change.

Finally, the role of CECCs is an integral part of the GOEC's localized plans moving forward. They continue to be avenues of local mobilization for Kentucky All★STARS and are visible throughout this proposal. They will work with local resources to ensure understanding of the updated STARS system, support local early childhood educators in understanding the early learning standards, provide professional development opportunities statewide, continue to work with families to ensure understanding of early childhood development, and ensure understanding of the Kindergarten Readiness screener.

**Access to Data**

- **Common Kindergarten Entry Screener**

The approved School Readiness Definition provides families and educators a single definition of what it means to be ready for kindergarten (Appendix). It was the enabling foundation for Kentucky's implementation of a Common Kindergarten Entry Screener. In Kentucky, school readiness means each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success. Beginning in the 2013-2014 academic year, every Kentucky public school district administered the common kindergarten entry screener adopted by the Kentucky Department of Education (Brigance K Screen III). It is the Kentucky Kindergarten Entry Assessment.



The Brigance was revised and validated in 2013 and aligns with Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards for 3 and 4 year olds (Appendix). Kentucky requires that each student is screened using the Core Assessments portion of the Brigance, as well as the Self Help/Social Emotional Scale to ensure that each of the five domains of development (communication and language, physical well being, cognitive/general knowledge, social/emotional and approaches to learning) are screened for readiness. When combined, these two pieces give teachers a better idea of the whole child than they may otherwise have at the beginning of the school year; it helps teachers determine areas that may need additional focus or supports that may need to be provided to ensure school success. It is not used to determine a child's eligibility for kindergarten. Districts do, however, have an option to follow up with additional assessments to determine specific student needs based on the screener's findings.

Schools report their screen results to the On-line Management System (OMS) provided by Curriculum Associates (Brigance vendor). From there, the screen data is placed into Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System where it may be shared with other agencies as appropriate. The readiness data will inform future decision-making and facilitate deliberate planning for programs and services that improve early childhood outcomes.

These data will also be analyzed in relation to the ongoing learning of children as they matriculate through the Kentucky educational system (K-12). Public school districts are required to gather information about each rising kindergartener's early care and education – their "prior setting" for learning. Beginning with the release of new data in November 2013, these Prior Setting data, as they are known, will be available to the public and to educators in the aggregate, providing yet another lens through which to consider early care options. Local communities, school districts, and state stakeholders will be able to make informed decisions about program improvements for young children being served in a variety of settings. The Prior Setting data being gathered for the first time are:

- state funded preschool services (those students who are 150% poverty and 4 years old or those who have an identified disability and are 3 or 4 years old);
- Head Start; and,

- child care settings (any setting licensed or certified by Kentucky, including our private preschools; tracked for STARs), home (with parent or guardian), and other (kin care, neighbor care, therapeutic care, etc.).

To be clear, we will collect the names of each center to support our work within the STARS system; however, the data will be public only in terms of its aggregate value as we determine trends in overall support for young children.

The Kentucky Department of Education currently funds the majority of the cost for implementing the common kindergarten screen through purchased tools and online subscriptions; KDE also provides free professional development supports and technical assistance to districts and state agencies (including the GOEC). Kentucky's school districts do incur costs to implement the screen as well, including, but not limited to tool translation and interpretive services and staff support to screen children (substitutes or additional pay if screening before school).

Piloted data released earlier this year indicates that just 28.2 percent of our rising kindergarten students are Ready or Ready with Enrichments; that is, 71.8 percent of the 31,480 children included in the 2012-13 pilot were not kindergarten-ready. The pilot data included children from 450 of Kentucky's 669 public elementary schools.

– **Data is shared by early childhood programs**

Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System is housed and maintained through the Kentucky Center on Education and Workforce Statistics or KCEWS; the KLDS is Kentucky's shared repository for data – a warehouse for storing longitudinal data sets. It includes sophisticated modules for matching data across different sources with different types of identifiers, report development systems, and a data model that allows identifiable data to be stripped from the records it receives. When, two years ago, Governor Beshear called upon the Early Childhood Advisory Council (p. 9) to begin developing and implementing recommendations on a data collection system for early childhood services, health services, and other programs, KCEWS had to be part of the solution. The KLDS is a malleable system that is sensitive to the federal and state privacy concerns and data requirements of individual agencies working within early childhood.

In creating links between various data systems to KLDS, we will have access to the entire early learning universe; we will also be building a data system for birth to work. Over time,

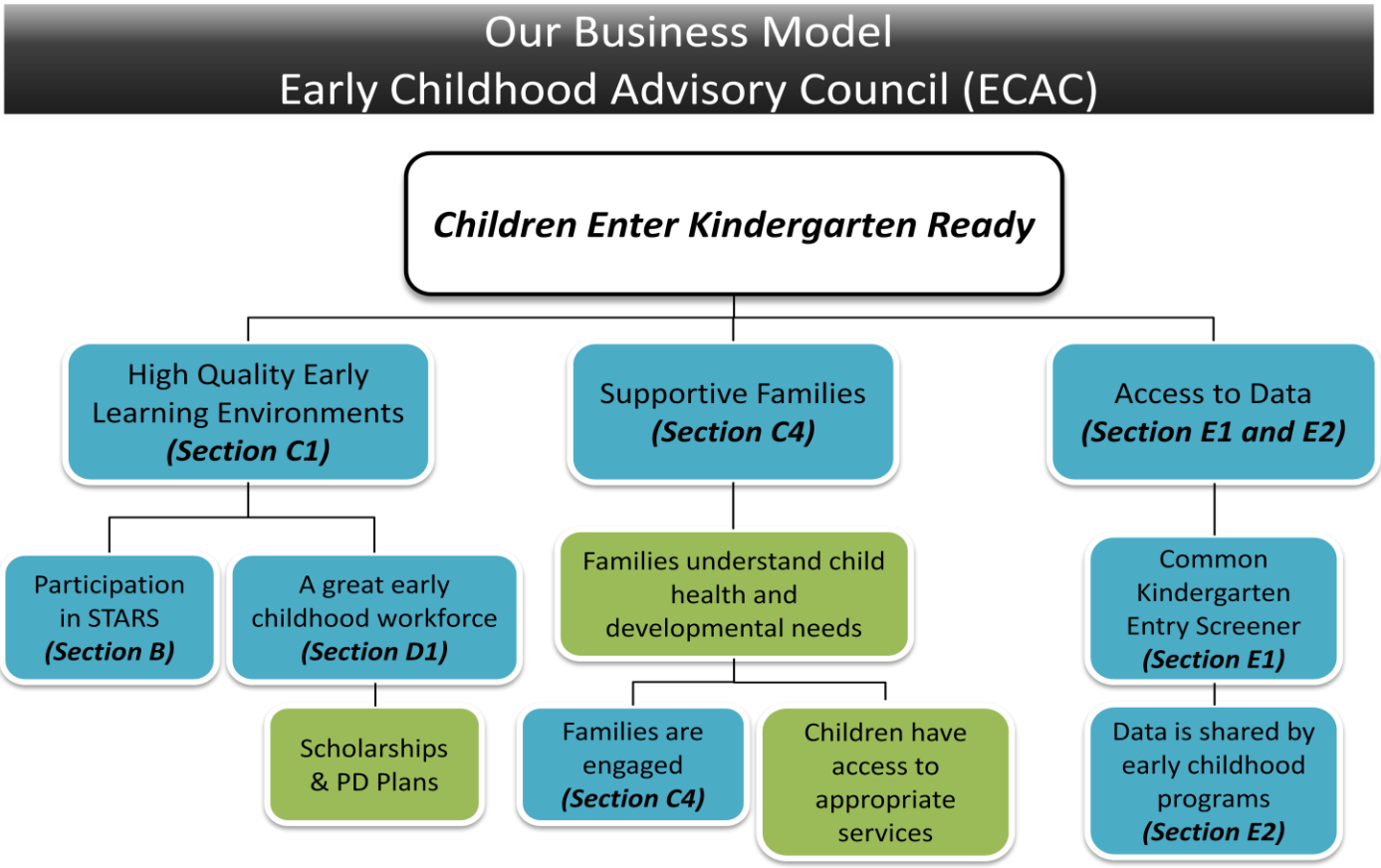
our office hopes to merge data from private sector early learning and development programs as well, providing incentives for data submissions. We have secured a signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to integrate data from HANDS Home Visiting, First Steps Early Intervention program, and several child care databases including the provider database and the workforce registry. Other agreements include several Head Start programs, who will participate in a pilot program to integrate their data, including child-level assessments. And, we are proposing to integrate public preschool data into the state's professional development registry.

Because the KLDS can match **individuals across multiple data systems**, it can provide a complete picture of a child over time. Specifically, the system has the ability to flag or follow children longitudinally. In our third-party evaluation researchers from the University of Kentucky have now identified students from early care programs, Head Start, and public preschool that will be followed through their transition to kindergarten next year and beyond. The draft findings for this year examined children's progress relative to the quality of the environment and indicated children from high-quality early care programs (3 or 4 STARS), Head Start and public preschools "showed growth on most of the subscales indicating **greater growth than would be expected**." Through the KLDS, researchers will now follow these students to kindergarten to see whether the growth in their early care settings impacts that transition; we will also follow those same students as they matriculate into primary and beyond.

KLDS will also be the repository for new STARS data, input as we move all early learning and development programs to the expanded rating system. As more fully outlined on page 91, the expanded rating system will include three separate but parallel rating processes that utilize separate sets of tools. Resulting assessment and environmental measures for public preschool programs will differ from Head Start programs which will differ from early care programs; however, the KCEWS will house it all and allow for appropriate statistical comparisons. For example, public preschools in Kentucky use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) as an environmental rating tool while the many Head Start programs utilize the CLASS; other early care programs will select an environmental rating scale as they move through the levels of the expanded STARS rating system.

**(A)(2)(c) Specific rationale that justifies the State's choice… [Focused Investment Areas]**

By now, it should be obvious: Kentucky All★STARS is **not something new** for Kentucky. We did not wake up one morning and decide to head down a new road. Kentucky All★STARS is a thoughtful, deliberate **expansion of our ongoing reform efforts** to improve outcomes for our youngest children. Therefore, the rationale for our focused investment areas is found in our ongoing reformation efforts. As outlined throughout this proposal, we are already working to expand nearly every piece of our business model; the areas shaded in green (below) are well under way. Our focused investment areas are noted in blue within our model and reference the specific investment areas by proposal section.




As noted in A4, **93 percent of our program budget is dedicated to Section B** – the expansion of our STARS rating system. Our rationale, found on page 49, is clear: no meaning for families can be found in a system with a myriad of complex quality indicators. In addition, a survey of families indicated less than 6 percent of early care providers voluntarily relate their quality

ratings to parents. **That's simply not fair** to Connie Johnson or other Kentucky families just like hers. She needs something visible and straightforward. No acronyms. No validity or reliability jargon. Therefore, we briefly note our rationale for our choice to invest in specific areas of our ongoing work – in most areas expanding our efforts; in others, adding new strategies.

**Section C1:** Kentucky already utilizes early learning and development standards and builds the foundations for K-3 learning. We will continue to include the Standards in all professional development and will also develop online training modules to ensure all early learning and development programs use the standards. Use of the Standards is already tied to the monitoring of public preschools and Head Start; we will also include the intentional use of the Standards within our STARS expansion as an indicator of increasing quality.

**Section C4:** Our 2011 survey of families indicated a need to provide additional outreach to families, particularly as we prepare young children for kindergarten. The two proposed strategies – Toyota bornlearning® Academies and the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework – provide us mechanisms to implement and create sustainable systems with our partners (CECCs, FRYSCs).

**Section D1:** The GOEC has in place an extensive system to provide professional development through partner agencies statewide. In D1, we note how that system will become more formalized and focused through an Early Childhood Education Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

**Section E1:** In 2013, the Kentucky Department of Education implemented a universal kindergarten screener. Data from the statewide assessment will be released in November and will be analyzed and shared through our network of partners, particularly our CECCs through the county-level Early Childhood Profiles.

**Section E2:** The GOEC continues to build systems to bridge early childhood data to Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System (KLDS). This will provide more than just access to the entire early learning universe; it will also build a data system for birth to work.

**Identification of the two or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (C):**

*Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address*

☒ (C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.

☐ (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.

☒ (C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.

☐ (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

**Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (D):**

*Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address*

☒ (D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.

☐ (D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

**Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (E):**

*Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (E) the State is choosing to address*

☒ (E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.

☒ (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

## (A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State

Improving collaboration, coordination and alignment across sectors is the hallmark of Governor Beshear's charge to the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and is infused throughout every aspect of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. The overarching principle that guides our ongoing reformation efforts – and the reform found in Kentucky All★STARS – is to create a much more unified system of services to support families and their young children.

When we think about Connie, Maya, and Knox Johnson and all the Kentucky families like them, we know our approach for early learning and development must be multi-faceted, taking into account considerations and outcomes for individual children. Maya, who is soon to leave Miss Anita's and head to kindergarten in a rural, Kentucky town faces different challenges than Knox, who will soon turn three years old and is learning his letters much earlier than Maya did; but those different needs are both real – especially to Mom.

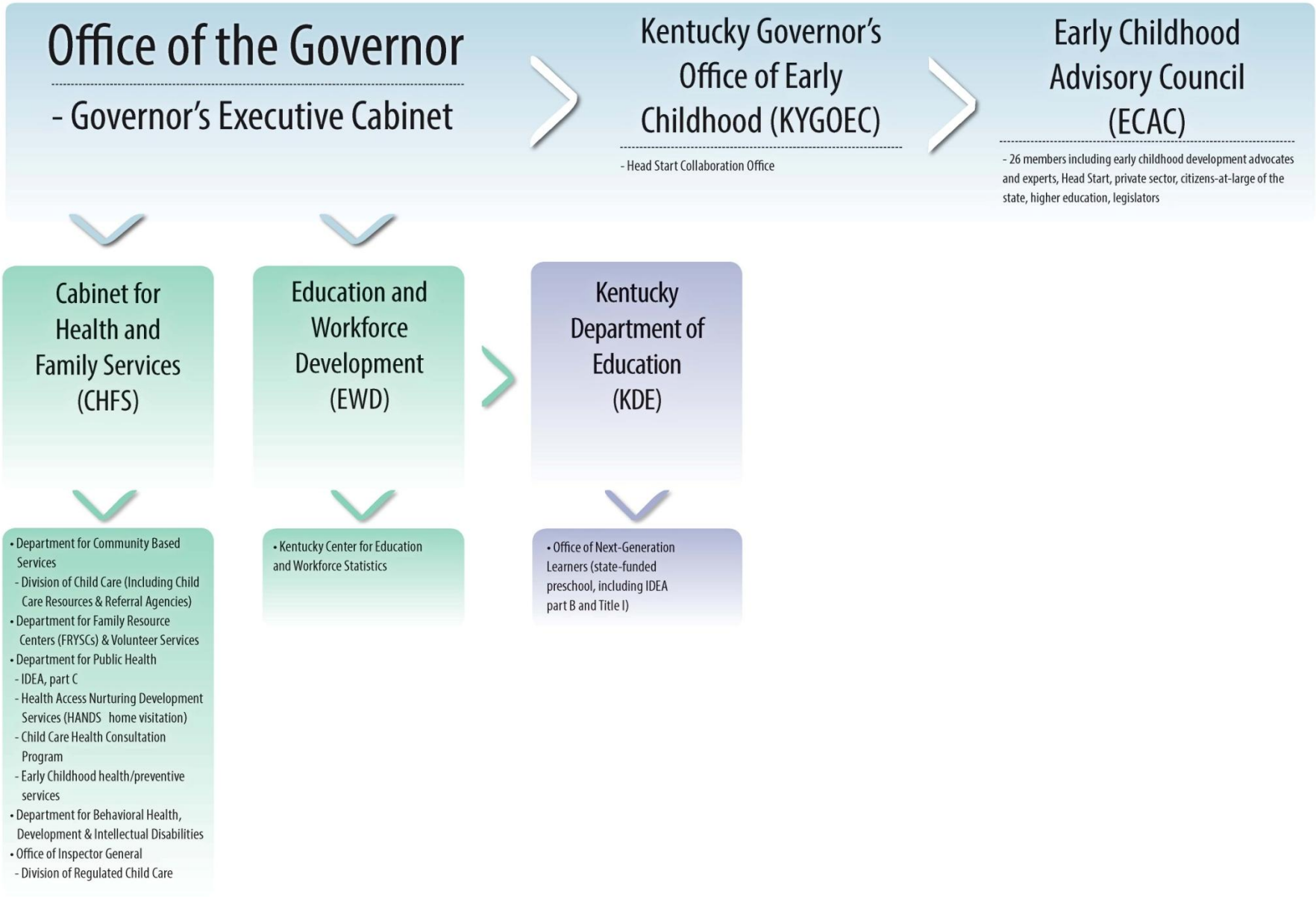
Kentucky All★STARS builds on existing agencies and service providers – each directly involved in planning and implementation, and each bringing their own expertise, networks and relationships with families, children and communities to bear for our High Need children.

### (A)(3)(a)(1) The organization structure for managing the grant, builds on existing

In 2009, Governor Beshear's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education drew together representatives from all relevant government agencies, as well as social and private sectors throughout the Commonwealth. His goal was to develop a statewide approach to identify and address key early learning and development needs. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) will serve as the Lead Agency for Kentucky All★STARS, ensuring implementation. It will define, prioritize and orchestrate the desired impact across all components in Kentucky's early learning and development systems, participating state and regional agencies, stakeholders, and programming.

To further integrate work across sectors at the statewide level, Governor Beshear also established, by executive order, the Early Childhood Advisory Council. The ECAC provides guidance and direction to our office – the GOEC – and includes a comprehensive and critical membership. The ECAC brings together the views and voices of all relevant, participating state agency stakeholders. The following graphic presents the integrated organizational structure envisioned to administer the Governor's statewide plan.

# Kentucky Early Learning & Development Organization Chart



The Advisory Council ensures our continuing focus on children – all children; they work with us to ensure each child in Kentucky is, as our motto says, Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Succeed. The Council will also serve as the reporting link for the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, which will provide the Executive Director of the Advisory Council with advice and assistance on the administration of part C of IDEA pursuant to federal regulations. Additionally, Kentucky's Cabinets for Health and Family Services and Education and Workforce Development, and the Kentucky Department of Education will also participate in the governance structure for Kentucky All★STARS; each of their respective leaders serve on the Early Childhood Advisory Council as fully participating members.

**(A)(3)(a)(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency…**

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood, as lead agency, will orchestrate and make recommendations and decisions which cut across the participating Kentucky cabinet agencies with respect to overall strategy, implementation planning and changes to the existing plan, as well as ongoing budgeting for initiatives undertaken pursuant to the grant. Through our professional staff members, we will inform our decisions by proactively seeking input of leaders and key staff of participating agencies, from relevant cabinet secretaries and the Commissioner of Education, and from members of the Early Childhood Advisory Council. As noted above, the ECAC is the state advisory council for GOEC.

As we implement Kentucky All★STARS and its reform measures, participating Cabinet Secretaries will make decisions for their agencies independently; that is, if a particular implementation activity or plan adjustment decision does not directly involve another participating cabinet agency, the relevant Cabinet Secretary will make that decision after considering input from the Office of Early Childhood and other agencies, as necessary.

**(A)(3)(a)(3) The method, process for making different types of decisions, resolving disputes**

As noted above, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood resides within the Executive Branch of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Different types of decisions will be made through the different stakeholder groups and relevant Cabinet Secretaries with the input of the GOEC. Each organization has had ongoing input in this proposal and will be actively involved in the implementation. Consensus has been the nature of our work; however, if a consensus within or between participating cabinet-level agencies cannot be reached regarding how to proceed, we

will defer to the Secretary of the Governor's Executive Cabinet, the highest appointed position in the executive branch, for a decision.

**(A)(3)(a)(4) Plan for when and how the State will involve representatives**

Formal meetings of the Early Childhood Advisory Council are held quarterly and will continue to be the primary venue for when and how the State will involve representatives on overall implementation and governance issues. However, each representative group works with participants and programs that include early childhood educators (or their representatives), parents and families (including parents and families of Children with High Needs), and other stakeholders in the planning and implementation of activities.

The Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Secretaries leading the Cabinets for Health and Family Services and Education and Workforce Development, and the Commissioner of Education all serve on the Early Childhood Advisory Council. Each of these agencies and their leaders has actively participated in the development of this plan and are strongly committed to implementing it. This commitment is born out in the strong Memoranda of Understanding which these participating State agency representatives have signed (Appendix), as well as the detailed scopes of work embedded within each MOU.

Programs outside state government that deliver services to children and families with public funding will also participate in the overall approach and implementation. For example, licensing requirements will automatically place early learning and development programs, public preschools and Head Starts in the expanded TQRIS system. Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) and Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs) are noted throughout this proposal as having key roles in implementation; their support is noted in our Letters of Support (Appendix).

**(A)(3)(b)(1) Reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan**

Kentucky All★STARS has the strong support of a broad group of stakeholders who will assist the Commonwealth in reaching our ambitious, yet achievable goals. A list of early learning intermediary organizations may be found in table (A)(3)(c)(2). These tables list the organizations that submitted letters of support and/or MOUs related to the implementation of this reform project.

Also of particular note are the philanthropic institutions who have submitted strong letters of support, including Toyota, Humana Foundation, Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Kentucky Youth Advocates, and many local United Ways. Kentucky has already been engaged with these organizations to support the development of Kentucky All★STARS, and we expect substantial support and partnerships to complement the federal funding to carry out the plan.

We also include strong letters of support from the Kentucky Association of School Boards, the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, and Kentucky Educational Television. Their support points to the deep commitment they and their respective constituents have in closing the school readiness gap for Children with High Needs.

Key organizational elements, supports, and needed commitments to successfully implement our ambitious but achievable plan are in place. However, recognizing that all early learning and development for children is provided locally, not at the state level, it is **just as important** to have a structure in place to integrate and improve early learning and development programs **in each community**. To help achieve this, Kentucky has worked for the past two years to revitalize and enhance its Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs). These local councils of volunteers and professionals, which are described below are the voice of the GOEC at the local level.

**(A)(3)(b)(2) Reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan… Scope of Work**

Strong Memoranda of Understanding from our participating agencies, which include a Scope of Work, are attached. Agencies and partners submitting MOUs include:

- Governor's Office of Early Childhood
- Cabinet for Health and Family Services
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Cabinet for Education and Workforce Development

**(A)(3)(b)(3) Reflect the strong commitment to the State Plan… Authorized representative**

A signature is provided from our Authorized Representative, Jack Conway, Kentucky Attorney General.

**(A)(3)(c)(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of support … Learning councils**

More than 200 local, state and regional partners have presented their support through their individual Letters of Support, found in our Appendix. At right, we present a summary of the types of letters provided; these are in addition to letters from our Early Learning Intermediary Organizations (our Early Childhood Advisory Council) and Local Early Learning Councils (CECCs; outlined below), and include partner groups as well.

Most notably, we have included letters from our CECC partners – the Community Early Childhood Councils. Established in 2001 as part of KIDS NOW, Kentucky currently has a CECC presence in 109 of its 120 counties. As part of Kentucky All★STARS, we will work with local groups of volunteers and professionals to ensure each county in the Commonwealth is served by a CECC. We will also ensure Councils have the capacity to undertake core activities to provide effective support and service integration to Children with High Needs and their families in every community across the State.

As outlined throughout our proposal and, in particular, in Section A2, the CECCs are effective agents for change in local systems that benefit families and children. They are able to bring together diverse members in their local communities and mobilize them to work together to achieve community-level improvements in kindergarten readiness. Since its creation, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood has worked with CECCs to ensure they are leaders and advocates for early childhood development. We have spent the last few years refocusing the mission of CECCs based on Stanford University's **Collective Impact model** for large scale community change Demonstrated below are examples of how CECCs have implemented the tenants of the Collective Impact Model:

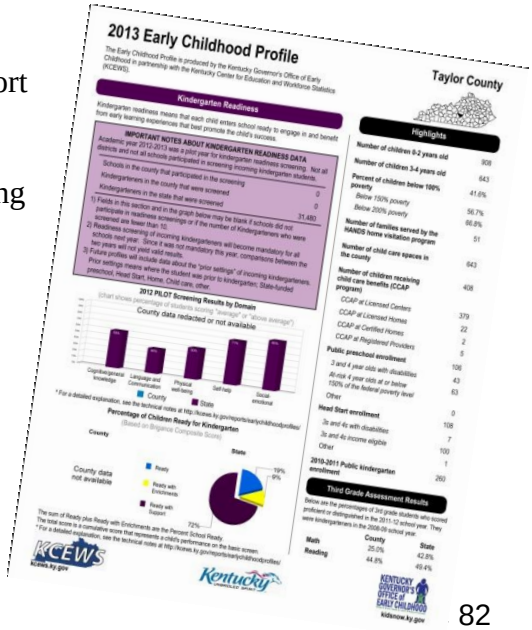
- **Share a Common Mission.** CECCs are focused on a common agenda: increasing the number of children who arrive at kindergarten "Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Succeed."
- **Measure Outcomes**. CECC effectiveness will be measured over time by the many data points in their local Early Childhood Profiles (example following) to a high quality

workforce to the outcomes on our Brigance Kindergarten Screener to the number of high-quality early learning and development programs in their communities (as rated by the expanded STARS).

- **Communicate Broadly**. CECCs bring all the partners to the community table on a monthly or quarterly basis to review and discuss progress, plan, and evaluate their results. In most communities, CECCs have been convening for a decade to do this work collectively. We are now asking CECCs to broadly share monthly messages around kindergarten readiness and early childhood development.
- **Provide Leadership**. CECCs, as independent community planning bodies, provide the backbone support for the kindergarten readiness work of their communities. While many do not have a dedicated staff, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood has provided CECC leadership development and capacity building to foster needed effectiveness skills;

Each Council has an appropriately broad-based membership that reflects the Commonwealth's "whole child" approach to early learning and development. Council membership consists of public and private partnerships with a commitment to increasing school readiness rates, particularly for high need children. As part of Kentucky's high-quality plan, the envisioned roles and contributions of CECCs will include:

- Continue family engagement strategies to ensure families understand early childhood development, including the broad implementation of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework (p. 161)
- Foster grassroots awareness and community driven support for early childhood development and school readiness through wide distribution of GOEC publications, including the Monthly Message, Parent Guides, the School Readiness Definition and new publications and messages developed through Kentucky All★STARS.
- Participate in all targeted training proposals, including but not limited to, Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework and CLASS (environmental rater).
- Continue promotion of and encourage participation in



the re-envisioned STARS for KIDS NOW Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

- Continue making data driven decisions using the Early Childhood Profile, as well as be the conduit for dissemination and understanding of the information. (Franklin County Profile in Appendix)
- The Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Advisory Council is committed to ensuring collaboration and sharing of best practices across the CECCs. In addition, they will facilitate capacity building and professional development programming to support the CECCs and to ensure each meets a minimum quality and capacity threshold.

Kentucky and specifically the Governor's Office of Early Childhood have invested well in the expansion of the CECC network. At the beginning of fiscal year 2013, 69 Councils were funded, covering a total of 105 counties; funding was increased by 20% to $1.2 million, as this was an expansion from previous years. For fiscal year 2014, we have received 74 applications for funding representing 109 Kentucky counties and have subsequently increased our funding for 2014 to $1.4 million. All current funding for CECCs is provided through the Governor's designation from Kentucky's Tobacco Settlement Funds.

**(A)(3)(c)(2) Detailed and persuasive letters of support … Others**

More than 200 local, state and regional partners have presented their support through their individual Letters of Support, found in our Appendix. Below, we present a summary of the types of letters provided. In addition, we call attention to particularly poignant letters by presenting them in full-page form. Other letters are presented in miniature with content and signatures clearly visible.

**"Other" Letters of Support by Type**

- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Elected Officials
- Local Head Starts
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Local Judge Executives (leaders of the local county governments)
- Private organizations
- Professional organizations
- Public school districts and superintendents
- Regional Training Centers (RTC)
- Local United Ways

| Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable) | |
|---|---|
| **List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State** | **Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix?** |
| Kentucky Head Start Association: State Affiliate for National Head Start Assoc. | YES |
| Kentucky Association for Early Childhood Education: State Affiliate for the National Association for the Education of Young Children | YES |
| Kentucky Division for Exceptional Children: State Affiliate for the Council of Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood | YES |
| Kentucky Education Association: Statewide union affiliate that represents Early Childhood Educators | YES |
| Child Care Aware: Child Care Resource and Referral Agency | YES |
| **Community Early Childhood Councils:** | |
| Adair County CECC | YES |
| Allen/Logan/Simpson CECC | YES |
| Anderson County CECC | YES |
| Barren County CECC | YES |
| Bath County CECC | YES |
| Bell/Harlan County CECC | YES |
| Boone County CECC | YES |
| Bourbon County CECC | YES |
| Boyle County CECC | YES |
| Bracken County CECC | YES |
| Butler/Edmonson CECC | YES |
| Calloway County CECC | YES |
| Campbell/Grant/Kenton CECC | YES |
| Carroll County CECC | YES |
| Casey County CECC | YES |
| Christian County CECC | YES |
| Clay County CECC | YES |
| Clinton County CECC | YES |
| Cumberland County CECC | YES |
| Daviess County CECC | YES |
| Fayette County CECC | YES |

| Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable) | |
|---|---|
| **List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State** | **Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix?** |
| Fleming County CECC | YES |
| Floyd County CECC | YES |
| Four River CECC<br>→ Ballard, Carlisle, Fulton, Hickman Counties | YES |
| Franklin County CECC | YES |
| Garrard County CECC | YES |
| Gateway CECC<br>→ Menifee, Morgan, Rowan Counties | YES |
| Graves/Marshall CECC | YES |
| Grayson County CECC | YES |
| Green/Taylor CECC | YES |
| Hancock County CECC | YES |
| Hardin County CECC | YES |
| Hardin County CECC | YES |
| Hart/Metcalfe/Monroe CECC | YES |
| Henderson County CECC | YES |
| Hopkins County CECC | YES |
| Jackson County CECC | YES |
| Jefferson County CECC | YES |
| Jessamine County CECC | YES |
| Johnson County CECC | YES |
| Larue County CECC | YES |
| Lawrence County CECC | YES |
| Lewis County CECC | YES |
| Lincoln County CECC | YES |
| Livingston County CECC | YES |
| Madison/Estill/Powell/Clark CECC | YES |
| Marion/Washington CECC | YES |
| Martin County CECC | YES |
| Mason County CECC | YES |
| McCracken County CECC | YES |
| McCreary County CECC | YES |

| Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable) | |
|---|---|
| **List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State** | **Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix?** |
| McLean County CECC | YES |
| Meade County CECC | YES |
| Mercer County CECC | YES |
| Montgomery County CECC | YES |
| Muhlenberg County CECC | YES |
| Nelson County CECC | YES |
| Northeastern Alliance CECC<br>→ Boyd, Carter, Elliott, and Greenup Counties | YES |
| Ohio County CECC | YES |
| OVEC Counties CECC<br>→ Gallatin, Spencer, Shelby, Henry and Trimble | YES |
| Owen County CECC | YES |
| Pendleton County CECC | YES |
| Perry/Leslie/Knott/Letcher CECC | YES |
| Pike County CECC | YES |
| Pulaski County CECC | YES |
| Robertson County CECC | YES |
| Rockcastle County CECC | YES |
| Rural KIPDA CECC<br>→ Bullitt and Oldham Counties | YES |
| Russell County CECC | YES |
| Todd County CECC | YES |
| Tri County CECC [Knox, Laurel, Whitley] | YES |
| Trigg County CECC | YES |
| Union County CECC | YES |
| United 4 Kids CECC<br>→ Breathitt, Lee, Owsley, and Wolfe Counties | YES |
| Warren County CECC | YES |
| Webster County CECC | YES |
| Woodford County CECC | YES |

## (A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant

Kentucky is requesting $45 million in funding from Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge Program, of which 93 percent will be used to expand the STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system (Absolute Priority). The remaining funds will be utilized to further develop complementary programming already in place (e.g., Strengthening Families, Toyota bornlearning® Academies, professional development, data bridging and consolidation with the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System, etc.).

The Commonwealth's high quality plan is ambitious and fosters a collaborative spirit across state and private agencies and organizations to achieve the overall goal of ensuring Kentucky's children are Ready to Learn, Ready to Grow, and Ready to Succeed. This collaboration includes cross-sector funding leveraged for use in various aspects of the plan.

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) will be the fiscal agent responsible for administering the grant funds. The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Human Services, Kentucky Department of Education and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet will be active participants and have a significant role in implementing the activities of Kentucky All★STARs.

The budget is organized around one main project and three complementary projects (not including technical assistance) which align to specific application criteria and involve multiple state agencies. Our plan details the infrastructure and supports already in place for the initiation of the projects as discussed in this application as well as the needed financial investment we require to ensure full implementation.

### (A)(4)(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds …

In 2011, as the Governor's Office for Early Childhood was just coming into operation, the Commonwealth of Kentucky submitted a proposal to the RTT-ELC program competition. While it was not funded, it was highly successful, as it served as the impetus for a number of significant activities for our young children. Our 2013 proposal and budget build from our ongoing work – not just over those two years but for the past 20-plus years, as noted in Section A1. Then and now, we have achieved success for children through our collaborations across the state; these are noted in table (A)(4)(1)

| Table (A)(4) – 1 Existing other Federal, State, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Source of Funds** | **Fiscal Year 2014** | **Fiscal Year 2015** | **Fiscal Year 2016** | **Fiscal Year 2017** | **Total** |
| ***Federal Child Care Development Funds(1)*** | **$77,804,700** | **$77,804,700** | **$77,804,700** | **$77,804,700** | **$311,218,800** |
| ***State General Fund (CCDF match/MOE)(1)*** | **$9,292,400** | **$9,292,400** | **$9,292,400** | **$9,292,400** | **$37,169,600** |
| ***Tobacco Master Settlement (CCDF match/MOE)(1)*** | **$8,640,000** | **$8,540,000** | **$8,540,000** | **$8,540,000** | **$34,260,000** |
| ***Tobacco Master Settlement Funds allocated to Community Early Childhood Councils and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood*** | **$1,950,600** | **$1,950,600** | **$1,950,600** | **$1,950,600** | **$7,802,400** |
| ***Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (Federal)*** | **$140,000** | **$140,000** | **$140,000** | **$140,000** | **$560,000** |
| ***School Readiness Branch General Fund*** | **$471,400** | **$471,400** | **$471,400** | **$471,400** | **$1,885,600** |
| ***School Readiness Branch Federal Fund*** | **$214,000** | **$214,000** | **$214,000** | **$214,000** | **$856,000** |
| ***Kindergarten Screener General Funds*** | **$95,000** | **$95,000** | **$95,000** | **$95,000** | **$380,000** |
| ***Kindergarten Screener Federal Funds*** | **$145,000** | **$145,000** | **$145,000** | **$145,000** | **$580,000** |
| ***Preschool Program Review*** | **$120,000** | **$120,000** | **$120,000** | **$120,000** | **$480,000** |
| ***Total:*** | **$98,873,100** | **$98,773,100** | **$98,773,100** | **$98,773,100** | **$395,192,400** |

| |
|---|
| *(1) While CCDF funds and state match/MOE are not targeted to achieve all of the specific outcomes in this grant application, to the extent that CCDF funds already support some related activities today, they will continue to do so. The state General Fund and Tobacco Master Settlement fund are used as the state match and MOE to meet the CCDF state support requirements. Within the above figures, $13,575,100 is utilized annually for the current STARS voluntary rating system. Total for Fiscal Years 2014-2017: $53,300,400*<br><br>*All fiscal years are state fiscal Years* |
| *(2) These figures are projections only. The amounts of federal, state and tobacco funds may change in future years. Current year Federal funding for CCDF has not been awarded at this time.* |

**(A)(4)(b) Describes … how the State will effectively & efficiently use funding**

This criterion is addressed in Section VIII, the Budget Narrative.

**(A)(4)(c) Demonstrates it can be sustained after the grant period ends …**

The majority of funding requested by the Commonwealth as part of this RTT–ELC proposal (93 percent) is for upfront costs and the personnel needed to implement the work of Kentucky All★STARs. These costs include the technology support for the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System, the design and implementation of the STARS expansion and ongoing professional development for Early Childhood Educators during the expansion, and the implementation of the Strengthening Families program and the Toyota bornlearning® Academies across the Commonwealth. These family engagement programs will be sustained through our Family Resource and Youth Service Centers as well as our Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs). The train-the-trainer models outlined in Sections A2 and C4 relay the embedded nature of both the Strengthening Families Approach and the Toyota bornlearning® Academies.

Funds will be used to provide the initial investment for development of our expanded data systems. Every project detailed in this application, once fully implemented, is sustainable with the existing Memorandums of Agreement/Understanding already in place with our state partners. Because of these partnerships, Kentucky will be able to sustain and support the ongoing programs and data systems from 2017 forward.

It is also important to note that Kentucky and Governor Beshear have made early childhood education a top priority. Despite five-year budget cuts of nearly $2 billion in the Commonwealth, the Governor and the Kentucky General Assembly have both ensured early childhood education funding is protected. As such, it will continue to be an area for funding and policy support as discussed in section A1.

# Section B
# High-Quality, Accountable Programs

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## (B)(1) High Quality Programs: Developing and adopting a common, statewide TQRIS

If you're hungry in Louisville, Kentucky – a city of nearly 1 million people – you can quickly determine a high-quality burger, rib or steak joint. In fact, you need only drive by a restaurant of any type to see the rating clearly posted to reflect one of four quality ratings: A (best) to D (least). The system is mandatory for all restaurants in the city.

However, you cannot easily determine whether one childcare or preschool facility is any better than another or whether either might be any good at all. Quality indicators for childcare and preschool programs for young children are only documented on a voluntary basis.

In 2000, in the KIDS NOW legislation, Kentucky established a quality rating system for all licensed early childhood programs. In 2001 the STARS for KIDS NOW voluntary rating system was launched, making Kentucky one of the early adopters of a rating system for childcare.

Kentucky All★STARS builds upon this existing voluntary system and expands it to cover all public and private Early Learning and Development programs where two or more non-relative children attend. Shifting to a mandatory program is the only way our TQRIS system can have the same meaning for parents as the restaurant ratings have for hungry diners. And an apples-to-apples comparison of early learning and development programs will only work if everyone can post the same kind of quality rating in their windows.

As outlined below, the STARS for KIDS NOW system will be expanded through an 18-month redesign process, already well underway. The TQRIS will apply to all programs of every type and size, assuring parents that **all programs** meet a minimum standard for early learning and that **some programs** can meet the individual needs of their children better than others.

### (B)(1)(a) TQRIS based on statewide set of tiered Program Standards

STARS for KIDS NOW (STARS) is Kentucky's statewide voluntary Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) for Early Learning and Development programs. All licensed Type I and Type II facilities and Certified family childcare homes are eligible to be rated. The rating system is comprised of four levels or blocks and provides a set of quality standards against which programs are measured. In a block system, in order to achieve a particular level, a program must meet all the requirements of that level and all the requirements of the lower levels. The quality standards for Type I facilities fall into four categories: Ratios, Curriculum, Training, and Personnel. The quality standards for Type II facilities and Certified homes also fall into four categories: Ratios, Curriculum, Training, and Business Practices.

In addition to the improvements recommended by the STARS Workgroup, through Kentucky All★STARS, we will shift the current system **from voluntary to mandatory for all childcare, state funded preschool and Head Start programs**, ensuring each program with two or more non-relative children 1) meets a minimum level of quality, 2) continues a process of improvement and 3) has access to the necessary supports and technical assistance to achieve high levels of quality. This will be accomplished through redesign of the STARS levels, then through legislation, linking the TQRIS system to licensing requirements. That is, by 2017 STARS will require each early learning and development program to participate in the TQRIS and to develop strategies to reach the higher levels of quality.

On page 103-104, we provide a grid example for one of our program types; in the existing STARS rating system, different grids exist for Type I and Type II programs and Certified childcare homes. The STARS Workgroup (list of members below) has already begun to recreate the rating system to include all programs and to expand the Domains and Sub-domains (p. 105). They have participated in a national learning table, reviewed best practices, reviewed rating scales, and formed recommendations that will be the foundational principles of the new TQRIS. The new rating system will provide the varied programs with multiple pathways to improvement.

**Members of the STARS Workgroup**

- Angela Boggs, Save the Children
- Marilyn Coffey, Retired Educator, Local School Board Member
- Cathy Darst, Breckinridge Grayson Programs, Head Start
- Rebekah Duchette, Boone County Success by Six
- Gail Edwards, Breckinridge Grayson Programs, Head Start
- Lee Eubank, STARS Quality Rater
- Pamela Fox, Anderson County Regional Training Center
- Cori Gadansky, Success by Six, Metro United Way
- Tracy Haddix, Chair, Community Action of Southern Kentucky
- Mary Howard, Early Childhood Services, Human Development Institute, UK
- Mary Beth Jackson, Kentucky Division of Child Care, CHFS
- Michelle Johnson, QEI, University of Kentucky
- Nancy Lovett, Calloway County Regional Training Center
- Rebecca Payne, Breckinridge Grayson Programs, Head Start
- Joe Roberts, Head Start Collaboration Office
- Margaret Sergin, Save the Children
- Phillip Smith, Division of Child Care, CHFS
- Terry Tolan, Governor's Office of Early Childhood
- Julie Witten, 4C for Children/NKY
- Katie Williams, Division of Program Standards, School Readiness Branch, KDE

To be clear, the STARS for KIDS NOW (STARS) quality rating system is Kentucky's statewide voluntary Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) for early care and education programs only. All licensed Type I and Type II facilities and Certified family childcare homes are eligible to be rated. The rating system is comprised of four levels or blocks and provides a set of quality standards against which programs are measured. In order to achieve a particular level, a program must meet all the requirements of that level and all the requirements of the lower levels. The quality standards for Type I facilities fall into four categories: Ratios, Curriculum, Training, and Personnel. The quality standards for Type II facilities and Certified homes also fall into four categories: Ratios, Curriculum, Training, and Business Practices.

Compliance with standards is verified through documentation of practices and observation of the program. The observation includes time for document review and administration of the appropriate Environment Rating Scale(s): Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R), Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R), the Family Childcare Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R), and the School-Aged Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS). The standards are differentiated by program type to reflect the different opportunities and constraints on quality in different settings.

Programs that enroll in STARS are eligible to receive technical assistance and support through the Quality Enhancement Initiative. This includes the provision of a STARS Quality Coordinator (SQC) who will explain the STARS rating requirements and process, assist the program in conducting an assessment of its needs and areas of improvement, provide technical assistance to improve program quality, and shepherd the program through the STARS rating process. Once a program is rated, it is eligible for a STARS Achievement Award. Additional funds may also be available to some programs to support their ongoing achievement and service to low-income children.

Historically, about 25% of licensed programs have participated. The Governor's Task Force recommended that participation be increased through increased parent education and awareness. Substantial progress has been made in increasing participation in the STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system since this recommendation was made. Today, we are at an historic high, with statewide participation in STARS currently at 984. The statewide penetration rate has increased to 37% overall, with 41% of licensed programs participating.

STARS has been a responsive system and has adapted in a number of ways based on recommendations in its first decade of use. As part of its process of continuous improvement, in 2011, the Division of Child Care in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services commissioned Child Trends to conduct an evaluation of the current system and to make recommendations for improvements. In the study Child Trends notes, "Kentucky is unique nationally in its investment in a process evaluation to address a set of comprehensive questions about the functioning of its QRIS after operating for over a decade. For example, Kentucky is the first QRIS in the nation to engage in a systematic, empirical examination of alternative models for the STARS rating process. The use of evaluation data to reflect on options for revisions and enhancement to STARS is a model that will be useful for other QRIS to follow. The Child Trends evaluation in 2011 identified the following strengths in the current STARS design.

**Strengths of the STARS Standards: Child Trends Findings**

- **The STARS standards are differentiated by program type**
  - Similar to other QRIS nationally, STARS articulates a set of program standards that are differentiated by program types including Type 1 and Type 2 childcare centers as well as Certified Family Homes.
  - This is an important recognition of the need to monitor and provide support quality in different types of early learning and development programs using a common framework but articulating quality requirements that are appropriate for the setting.
- **The STARS standards demonstrate alignment with three quality areas: program structure, children's experiences in the environment, and health and safety.**
  - The STARS standards (as well as items from the Environment Rating Scales and licensing regulations) address three foundational quality domains that are essential to providing children with a structured, healthy environment for learning.
  - The domains of program structure, children's experiences in the environment, and health and safety are important because they address the structural features in the setting that promote optimal exploration and interaction with the environment and that support early childhood staff/personnel in their work environment.

The Child Trends recommendations were presented to the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) in January of 2012. Subsequently, the ECAC convened the STARS Workgroup and work on a new rating system began. Members of the Workgroup are included on page 93. While the findings were encouraging, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the ECAC knew more was needed to build the next generation QRIS – a system that will be a natural progression, as noted recently by Debi Mathias (quote box below).

> Early QRIS systems, out of necessity, addressed the structural and global quality of programs. Childcare for low-income families experienced eroding financing and a crisis in the stability of the workforce based on economic, political and societal factors. The foundation of licensing was often a low bar and dealt mainly with important health and safety factors. As states began to address school readiness and the quality of childcare, the work was around improving baseline performance in childcare programs and building small incremental steps to higher quality. This was especially true at the beginning levels of the QRIS. Approaches to monitoring and sources of evidence for quality included using available environmental and other structural assessments. This approach helped stabilize programs and identified capacity for further investment.
>
> **Moving Ahead in Early Care and Education Systems Building by Debi Mathias**
> **Director, QRIS National Learning Network**

In the following pages and sections, we will describe attributes of the current TQRIS, the recommended enhancements, and the plans for implementation.

The STARS Workgroup began their redesign work armed with the Child Trends evaluation (Appendix), the results of a recent third party evaluation conducted by the University of Kentucky, and their collective experience as diverse early childhood community members. They spent several months reviewing the evaluations, considering best practices from other states, and reviewing measurement scales. In March 2013, the Workgroup reached agreement on the principles which should be reflected in the new TQRIS (STARS):

- STARS will be a hybrid system including some blocks (lower level) and some weighted points (higher level)
- Licensing will be incorporated at 1 STAR
- The system will expand to a 5-STAR system

- STARS will promote continuous improvement
- It will provide differentiated pathways to quality for all programs, eliminating specific barriers to higher star levels for high-quality programs serving small numbers
- We will include professional development across all areas
- STARS will include classroom interaction, robust family engagement, screening and assessment
- The curriculum section will be enhanced to align more clearly with the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards

In addition, the STARS Workgroup has linked its work to program standards reflected within this RTT-ELC proposal. Each is already included in our rating of quality early learning and development programs or will be part of our high-quality plan for expansion of the STARS rating system.

- **Early Learning and Development Standards**. The STARS tiers have their foundation in Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards, initially developed in 2003 and revised in 2009 and 2013 to better align with the approved kindergarten readiness definition and Kentucky's acceptance and implementation of the Common Core Standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics (p. 138+). The Early Childhood Standards align to the instructional standards of public K-12 schools in Kentucky – specifically, the Kentucky Core Academic Standards for Kindergarten. The current system TQRIS was developed before the release of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards. Consequently, even though they currently align with the TQRIS rating system and Professional Development Framework, they are not explicit. In the new TQRIS, lower levels of the system would require training on the Early Childhood Standards for all staff. At higher levels, programs would show evidence of use of Standards in lesson plans and use of assessment data to support use of the Standards. Additional information on the Kentucky Early Learning Standards is found in C1.
- **Comprehensive Assessment System**. Kentucky currently has a Comprehensive Assessment Guide (CAG) and list of assessments approved for use by publicly funded preschool, childcare, etc. All approved assessments have been aligned with the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards, as outlined in Section A1d. The current TQRIS does not require programs to screen or assess children, although they have been encouraged to do so and

trained (by CECCs and others) to do so. Many high quality programs currently do screening and assessment. In the new TQRIS, at the lower levels educators would receive training on the use/importance of childhood assessment (and referral) and screening. Kentucky has mobilized the CECCs to focus on screening and assessment and distribution of the CAG in the past. The Child Care Aware staff and the STARS training coordinators and CECCs will provide the training to staff at the lower levels. At STARS level 2 and 3, we would use more screening than in the past; and at STARS level 4 and 5, we would move to screening and genuine assessment. A potential barrier here is cost. It is expensive to purchase/train/implement authentic childhood assessment tools. During the pilot, we will identify community partnerships that might increase providers' access to training being conducted by school districts for their preschool programs and with Head Start programs.

- **Early Childhood Educator Qualifications**. In our annual Third Party Evaluation of the STARS rating system, Early Childhood Education levels and years of experience teaching young children have consistently been associated with positive child outcomes in our 3 and 4 STARS programs, findings that mirror the literature. Therefore, improving the quality of the workforce continues to be a priority that will be reflected in our revised program standards. Our emphasis on professional development, scholarships and systems of supports to early childhood educators will be expanded and marketed to reach all eligible educators. Already Kentucky has in place scholarship programs for childcare personnel seeking credentials including: Child Development Associate credential (CDA), an Associate degree in early childhood education, a Bachelor degree in interdisciplinary early childhood education, and/or a Kentucky Early Childhood Development Director's Certificate. More than 30 two- and four-year institutions in Kentucky accept those scholarships and allow childcare professionals to take up to nine hours of coursework each semester. The new TQRIS will continue to address staff education and professional development, with emphasis on those areas where additional knowledge and capacity is needed. Kentucky's Professional Development Framework is found in Section D1. The expanded system will also award points to programs that implement tools that measure adult child interaction. Programs utilize tools to identify opportunities to target professional development opportunities for Early Childhood Educators. Participants will receive training on the importance of and effective uses of adult child interactions. Participants that implement use of adult child interaction

tools for professional development will receive points toward progressing them to the next level of quality.

- **Family Engagement Strategies**. There are perhaps a dozen touch-points of support for low-income families in most Kentucky communities, including the local health department, the SNAP office (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as food stamps), and various other health, food and assistance agencies funded by local, state or federal agencies. But the early learning and development program is the one constant, recurring touch-point for low-income families with children. Parents and caregivers see their child's teacher or teachers almost each day. Similarly, these teachers see parents and caregivers each day, providing a critical opportunity for communication and support. The current TQRIS does include family engagement strategies which are activity focused. The STARS Workgroup has reviewed a number of models in its search for more outcome-based parent engagement measures. They have endorsed the Strengthening Families Approach for building Family Protective Factors as the unifying framework for early learning environments. Working with other private and public partners, Kentucky will adopt the "Strengthening Families" Framework, outlined in Sections A2 and C4. In the TQRIS, programs will start with the self assessment and developing a plan at the lower rating categories. They will use the Parent Guides to increase parent knowledge of early childhood development at the lower levels to promote the use of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards. The tool would be aligned with any federal or State requirements around family engagement (Parent Family Community Framework). At higher rating levels, programs will demonstrate their efforts to build "protective factors."
- **Health promotion practices**. Program standards reflect health-related and environmental standards critical to ensuring that all children are healthy and ready to learn. Licensing of childcare programs represent the minimum standard for health and safety. In addition, all childcare workers receive training in health and safety practices. In the expanded STARS tiered quality rating system, participants would receive points for specializing around recognized needs (ex. obesity, oral health, disabilities, mental health, asthma free zones, etc). Preschool and Head Start both have required health promotion practices. Both Head Start and Child Care require that children are up to date on all their immunizations prior to enrollment. Everyone has to have a Background and TB test. Head Start utilizes the "I am Moving, I am

Learning" approach to address childhood obesity and some early care programs use "Let's Move! Childcare." In the newly redesigned STARS, programs would receive points toward improving their quality rating for utilizing such programs. In addition, we will consider Kentucky's low ranking in oral health for young children (ranking 49th out of 50 states); we are committed to the notion that the whole child must be ready in order for them to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond, and that certainly includes having a healthy body. In short it is hard for young children to focus on learning when they have cavities or their mouth hurts. Through a partnership with a private business, Kentucky will distribute 20,000 magnets to parents raising awareness of the importance of Oral Health. Through this partnership, parents will also provide Community Early Childhood Councils with 1,000 DVDs that they will distribute to parents.

- **Effective Data Practices**. The current system does not require use of data. Upper levels of the new system would award points for sharing data with state and local early childhood systems. All staff will be required to put their professional development data into the ECE-TRIS Professional Development Registry, explained more fully in Section D1. We anticipate screening will be required starting at the STARS 3 level of the newly redesigned system. This data will be utilized to individualize instruction for the child and shared with parents to identify possible areas of support. In the higher levels of the newly redesigned system, points will be awarded to programs that regularly screen, assess and share data with parents. Data may be captured by Kentucky Early Childhood Data System (KEDS); as part of our rating system redesign, we will work with the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics, the maintainer of the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (p. 200), to determine additional systems approaches for our expanded STARS system.

In this expansion, Kentucky has further committed that these Standards shall apply **across all program types including public, private and home-based**. However, because of the diversity in the types of early learning and development programs, Kentucky recognizes the indicators for quality for each standard will need to be **adaptive to each program type**. In order to achieve this goal, Kentucky plans to hire a TQRIS Coordinator to oversee the work necessary to expand the current STARS system. The Coordinator, along with members of the STARS Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and other state

stakeholders, will form the STARS Redesign Team. It is important to note that the STARS Workgroup is comprised of an inter-disciplinary cross sector group of early childhood experts and advocates and has been working for the past 18 months on plans to expand the STARS system.

Kentucky's plan to expand the current TQRIS will include two distinct phases. The first phase, consisting of the first year of the project, will be the **Planning Phase**. The STARS Redesign Team will develop the rating indicators necessary to monitor all of the public, private and home-based environments that will be included in the new rating system. As noted above, we anticipate Kentucky will need to develop several different rating "grids" for the various early care and development environments. This strategy is aligned with the State's desire to maintain maximum flexibility to offer families and communities. During the first year, Kentucky's team will design indicator grids for:

- State Funded Preschool
- Head Start Locations (not in a public school location)
- Type I and Type II Licensed Centers
- Family Certified Homes
- Registered Homes (Family Friend and Neighbor Care)

To be very clear, **all of the grids** will include **all of the program standards** listed above. However, the indicators used to denote quality levels of each Standard will differentiate by program type. The STARS Redesign team will work to ensure that, within each grid, standards are measurable and meaningfully differentiate program quality.

As described above, Kentucky contracted with Child Trends in 2011 to conduct an evaluation of the current STARS rating system. Results of that evaluation recommended (among other things) that the STARS system **become a hybrid system of measurement**. That is, each level of quality will be differentiated between block levels and point-based levels. In block levels, participants would have to meet all criteria in order to move to the next level of the quality rating. At the higher levels, an accumulation of points would move participants to higher ratings. At this time, the Redesign Team anticipates recommending that Kentucky adopt a hybrid system for its expanded STARS – our tiered quality rating and improvement system.

During **Phase Two**, Kentucky will conduct a year-long pilot with Early Learning and Development programs that participate in the current STARS system. During this time the

STARS Redesign Team will apply the new grids to the pilot programs to ensure that they meaningfully differentiate levels of program quality. The final year of the pilot will include an evaluation period in which it is anticipated the grids would be altered and updated to lessons learned during the pilot.

Finally, the STARS Redesign Team will, in the first 18 months, design a rollout plan for the newly designed system. This will include a migration plan to transfer current participants in the voluntary system into the newly designed TQRIS mandatory system and to onboard our preschool Head Start programs that have not participated in STARS to this point. The Redesign Team will also coordinate with the Kentucky Department of Education and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to coordinate training on the new system. The rollout plan will also include a public awareness campaign that will inform parents, families and communities about the details of the new system.

**(B)(1)(b) Has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate quality levels**

To more fully understand the current STARS for KIDS NOW rating system, we have included on the following pages an example of one of the STARS level grids and the key for a Type II early learning and development program. The one-page grid includes four domains and is a one-size-fits-all measure for programs.

Revised, 1/1/10

# STARS for KIDS NOW CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM STANDARDS
## LICENSED TYPE II FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ratios | 1. Current Licensing standards; 12 maximum number children in care<br>Age Ratio<br>0-1 1:5<br>1-2 1:6<br>2-3 1:10<br>3 and older 1:12<br>2. Post prominently in the home and maintain compliance with the above staff to child ratios and group size | 1. Current Licensing standards; 12 maximum number children in care<br>Age Ratio<br>0-1 1:5<br>1-2 1:6<br>2-3 1:10<br>3 and older 1:12<br>2. Post prominently in the home and maintain compliance with the above staff to child ratios and group size | 1. Age Ratio<br>0 - 1 1:4<br>1 - 2 1:5<br>2 - 3 1:8<br>3 and older 1:12<br>2. Post prominently in the home and maintain compliance with the above staff to child ratios and group size | 1. Age Ratio<br>0 - 1 1:4<br>1 - 2 1:5<br>2 - 3 1:8<br>3 and older 1:12<br>Post prominently in the home and maintain compliance with the above staff to child ratios and group size |
| Curriculum | 3. Current licensing standards<br>4. Attend an overview of STARS prior to program participation<br>5. Post in a prominent area: Planned Program of Activities<br>6. Daily Schedule<br>7. Coordinate at least one annual activity involving parental or family participation<br>8. Agree to conduct the environment assessment within the first twelve months of Participation<br>9. During the second year: develop written Improvement plan in each area identified by the environment assessment as needing improvement | 3. Level 1 requirements **plus**:<br>4. One additional family involvement activity annually (minimum of 2)<br>5. Provide documentation of a written plan for parental or family involvement<br>6 Achieve an average score of at least three (3) on the ERS<br>7 Develop annual written ERS improvement plan with assistance, if requested, from Cabinet or its designee.<br>8. Maintain minimum average ERS score of 4 by 4th year and beyond | 3. Level 2 requirements **plus**:<br>4. One additional family involvement activity annually (minimum of 3)<br>6. Achieve an average score of at least 4.5 on the ERS<br>7. Achieve a score of at least 5 on the ERS portion pertaining to the use of television | 2. Level 3 requirements **plus**:<br>3. One additional family involvement activity annually *(minimum of 4)*<br>4. Achieve an average score of at least 5.5 on the Environment Rating Scales<br>5. Accreditation by state approved national accrediting organization<br>**<u>To qualify for Enhancement Award:</u>**<br>An average program score **above 5.5** on family child care ERS |
| Training | 10. Current licensing standards<br>11. Develop and implement a written annual plan for obtaining training for each employee, including the licensee | Level 1 requirements **plus:**<br>11 & 12. Licensee and each staff person annually complete fifteen (15) clock hours of early care and education training approved by the cabinet or its designee<br>13. Comply with provisions of:<br>a) 11 KAR 16:040, Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program recordkeeping requirements; and<br>(b) 11 KAR 16:060, Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program system of monetary incentives | 8. Level 2 requirements **plus:**<br>9. **Staff** complete a total of **18** clock hours of training annually **<u>or</u>** have Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher and completes 15 clock hours of training annually<br>10. **Director** completes a total of **21** clock hours of training annually **<u>or</u>** has Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher **and** Completes **18** clock hours of training annually<br>By 4th year in STARS, director **must** have CDA or higher | 6. Level 3 requirements **plus**:<br>7. **Staff** have a total of **21** clock hours training annually **<u>or</u>** Commonwealth Child Care Credential or higher<br>8. Director has received a CDA or higher Degree in Early Childhood Education<br>Director completes the Kentucky's Director's |
| Business Practices | 14. **Written** program policies including: current rates, hours of operation, plan for how info is shared daily with parents, late fees, holidays, vacation, illness, who may pick up a child<br>15. Maintain a **written** parent/provider agreement | Level 1 requirements **plus**:<br>14. Provide proof that a recordkeeping system Is maintained, including:<br>a) Documentation of business expenses<br>b) Income from business | 14. Level 2 requirements **plus:**<br>15. Provide families with a **written** daily report for children age 2 and under<br>16. Parents provided with handbook that contains program's policies | Level 3 requirements **plus**:<br>9. Be a member of an early childhood professional organization |
| Regulatory Compliance | Current license in good standing | Current license in good standing | Current license in good standing | Current license in good standing |

Created, 1/1/10

# KEY
## to STARS STANDARDS VERIFICATIONS
## Certified Family Child Care Homes

| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Ratios*** | 1& 2. **Ratios/ Capacity:** Applicable ratios and capacity related to each STARS level must be posted prominently and adhered to at all times | 1& 2. **Ratios/ Capacity:** Applicable ratios and capacity related to each STARS level must be posted prominently and adhered to at all times | 1. **Ratios: Ratios/ Capacity:** Applicable ratios and capacity related to each STARS level must be posted prominently and adhered to at all times<br>2. **Employ an assistant** if the home cares for At least 6 children and more than 3 are less than 24 months old | 1. **Capacity**, Not to exceed 9 children, with no more than 6 unrelated. The capacity must be prominently posted and adhered to at all times |
| *Curriculum* | 3. **Current Certificate:** License must be posted.<br>4. **STARS Overview:** Documented by an overview certificate issued to provider<br>5. **Program of Activities:** Documented by a posted plan outlining activities that will occur with the children<br>6. **Daily Schedule:** Documented by a posted schedule outlining the daily routine of the program<br>7. **Family Activity**: Verify that at least one (1) activity took place or show written evidence that an activity is scheduled<br>8. **FDCRS:** Documented by provider signature on DCC-401 as intent to complete within 12 months<br>9. **Improvement Plan:** Second year requirement. Verify upon provider agreement with DCC-401 | 3. **Level 1 requirements plus**:<br>**Family activity**: Verify that at least two (2) activities took place or show written evidence that an activity is scheduled<br>8. **Family activity plan**: Documented by a written plan, either for the current year or following year<br>6. **FDCRS Score of 3:** Documented by ERS assessment completed by Rater<br>7. **Written improvement plan** Documented by written plan if ERS average score is 3.0 or less<br>8. **FDCRS score of 4 :** Documented by ERS assessment completed by Rater | 3. **Level 2 requirements plus**:<br>4. **Family activity**: Verify that at least three (3) activities have been completed or show written evidence that an activity is scheduled<br>6. **FDCRS Score of 4.5:** Documented by ERS assessment completed by Rater<br>7. **Television use**: FDCRS score of at least 5 on item relating to television usage as scored by Rater<br>(Provider limits use of TV to programs and video games regarded as good for children. No more than 2 hrs per day. Activities are provided as an alternative while TV is on) | 2. **Level 3 requirements plus**:<br>**Family activity**: verified that at least four (4) activities took place or show written evidence that an activity is scheduled<br>6. **FDCRS Score of 5.5:** Documented by ERS assessment completed by Rater<br>3. **Accreditation**: Documented by accreditation certificate or written notification of accreditation from an approved source<br>**Enhancement Award:**<br>Verify through FDCRS assessment as scored by Rater |
| ***Training*** | 10. **Annual Training:** Verified through review of training certificates and/or ECE-TRIS training record<br>11. **Training Plan:** The certified provider must development and implement an annual training plan within in the first year of STARS participation | **Level 1 requirements plus**:<br>10. **CPR and first aid** Documented by approved certification cards or documents<br>11. **At least 9 training clock hours**: Documented by approved training certificates and/or ECE-TRIS training record | 8. **Level 2 requirements plus**:<br>9. **At least 18 training clock hours and approved credential** Documented by approved training certificates and/or ECE-TRIS training record<br>10. **CDA or higher**: *(fourth year requirement)* documented by current CDA credential<br>11. **Orientation for assistants**: Copy of orientation training certificate for all assistants. Documented by approved training certificates and/or ECE-TRIS training record<br>12. **Assistants- 6 annual training hours:** Documented by approved training certificates and/or ECE-TRIS training record | 4. **Level 3 requirements plus**:<br>7. **Director's credential or equivalent**: Verified by copy of credential<br>**CDA or higher**: Documented by current CDA credential |
| ***Personnel*** | 14. **Program Policies**: Must have documented policies on hand.<br>15. **Parent/Provider Agreement:** Documented by A sample written agreement and evidence of its use | **Level 1requirements plus**:<br>14. **Record keeping system:** Documented by written financial records showing income and expenses | 14. **Level 2 requirements plus**:<br>15. **Written daily report**: Documented by a sample report *and* verified by interview that guardians of children less than 2 years old receive a written daily report<br>16. **Handbook**: Verified by reviewing parent/family handbook | **Level 3 requirements plus**:<br>9. **Professional organization**: Documented by written evidence of current membership |
| *Regulatory Compliance* | **Posted Certificate** | **Posted Certificate** | **Posted Certificate** | **Posted Certificate** |

As we implement our high-quality plan to expand the existing STARS rating system, we anticipate moving to a Domain and Sub-domain system that would look something like the following. It will likely include four domains and ten sub-domains that are differentiated across the five STARS levels. The listing is based on the previous work by the STARS Redesign Team. It should be noted that the newly designed TQRIS will include **all** of the Program Standards required in Section B(1)(a). This includes Health Promotion Practices and Effective Data Policies. This is mentioned because they do not explicitly appear on the anticipated domain/sub-domain table; rather, **participants will receive training on these Standards in the lower tiers** of the system (block) and will get points in the highest tiers of the system.

| Anticipated Domains | Anticipated Subdomains |
|---|---|
| Learning & Development | • Curriculum and planning<br>• Child screening and assessment<br>• Classroom environment |
| Administrative & Leadership Practices | • Benefits and compensation<br>• Program administration<br>• Staff management |
| Staff Qualifications & Professional Dev. | • Staff education<br>• Professional development |
| Family & Community Engagement | • Transitions<br>• Communication and engagement |

As outlined within our plan in previous pages, each domain and sub-domain will include specific characteristics or quality indicators that clearly demonstrate higher levels of quality as programs intentionally move from 1 STARS to 2 to 3 and finally to 4 or 5 STARS. Much of this work is already underway in the STARS Redesign Team. As noted, the STARS Team, working with the Division of Child Care, re-envisioned how each of the Program Standards would fit in the new TQRIS. The new hybrid TQRIS (as it is currently in draft) would **begin the progression to higher quality with Licensing** at the foundational level. Programs that meet the state licensing standards would rate as 1 STARS. Level 2 and 3 would be block – meaning a program must

meet all of the stated requirements to achieve that rating. Levels 4 and 5 would be earned through a weighted point system. The STARS rating system would include differentiated requirements (GRIDS) for licensed programs (Type 1, Type 2 and Certified Childcare Home), for public preschool classrooms, and for Head Start. Registered providers would also receive a pathway to quality and extensive technical assistance to encourage them to become Certified or Credentialed.

**(B)(1)(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development**

Someone in Louisville must have made it a law. Certainly that is the only way restaurants would place a health inspection quality rating on the front window. But the system will only work if everyone participates, just as a quality rating system of any kind is only meaningful if all early learning and development programs are included.

Similarly, only 41 percent of licensed early care and development programs currently participate in the STARS rating system. Why? Perhaps because there is no law mandating that participation, perhaps because there is no benefit to being in the quality rating system.

Therefore, as we have done in the past, we will again approach the Kentucky General Assembly to link our STARS system to licensure **and** require all providers of early learning and development regardless of type be licensed and participate in the STARS rating system. Our collaborative work to accomplish this task is already underway; partner agencies committing to Kentucky All★STARS share our resolve to mandate participation in the system. That can only be done through licensure.

**Definition of "kindergarten ready"**

> In Kentucky, school readiness means each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success.

Will we be successful? Yes. We have been successful in the past. In 2009, Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear created the Early Childhood Advisory Council, giving them as their first charge the challenge of creating an official definition of school readiness. In the years that have passed, the ECAC and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood have worked with partners to create that definition (above) and also put in place Kentucky's first Kindergarten Screener, which was used statewide in August 2013. A number of legislative initiatives have been forwarded successfully through the Kentucky General Assembly, as noted in Section A. Already, we are

working with lawmakers and stakeholder groups to fashion the language – all with the full support of our twice-elected Governor.

Therefore, beginning in 2014, we will again approach the Assembly to advocate for our youngest children. As noted on page 7, Governor Beshear has made young children one of his top five priorities. We have yet to be turned down by the General Assembly and believe we will have similar success making licensure and STARS a mandatory part of our protections for young children.

Please refer to the end of section (B)(5) for a comprehensive work plan.

## (B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's TQRIS

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood operates by maximizing partnerships to increase engagement of targeted groups, including low-income parents and families. Our high-quality plan to redesign and implement a high-quality rating system is dependent upon the tremendous outreach capacity of partner agencies throughout the state, as further outlined below.

### (B)(2)(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach all publicly funded …

Young Maya Johnson was about six months old when she first arrived at Miss Anita's early care program. Her mother, Connie, asked all the right questions, concerned her firstborn would not get the attention she needed throughout the day: Is the center safe? What is the feeding and naptime schedule? How many adults are here? What kind of experience or training do you and your aide have? How do you discipline? What if she gets sick? What if another child gets sick? Can I visit whenever I have time? What will Maya do each day?

By the time Knox arrived two years later, Miss Anita's was the family's choice; there were no more questions to ask – not for the newborn or for the soon-to-be preschooler. It's not that Connie is unconcerned for her children; in fact, the opposite is true. But after two years and more than 800 drop-offs and pick-ups, Connie is not worried. She is:

- **Thankful**. Maya and Knox have rarely come home with anything worse than the sniffles; they both love the other children; and they shower her every day with colored in worksheets.
- **Unaware**. Connie graduated from high school and took a couple of courses at the area community college; but neither gave her any guidance for her role as a mom. She is oblivious to the concept of intentional play, the power of rhyming, print awareness, etc.
- **Isolated.** The Johnson family lives in a rural, high-poverty Kentucky community of less than 20,000 residents. Almost half of all Kentuckians live in these rural areas. The other half live in metropolitan areas (Louisville, Lexington) or small cities (Bowling Green, Owensboro, Elizabethtown). Even if low-income families acquire the knowledge to guide their choices, facilities are few and (literally) far between.

So does that mean Connie "settles" for sub-par care for her children? Certainly not. It simply means we must make sure **all providers of early learning and development programs provide quality service**. Participation in Kentucky's current Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (STARS) is voluntary for facilities that are licensed through the Division of Regulated

Child Care of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Licensed centers (and certified family homes) may participate in the rating system to receive incentives, including subsidies through Kentucky's Child Care Development Fund program, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Tier participants also receive training and technical assistance through the Regional Training Centers (RTCs) and Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs).

The incentives, however, are small and are not available for all types of early learning and development programs. As our STARS Redesign Workgroup continues to expand the TQRIS to all private sector child care programs, Head Start, and state-funded preschool programs, we will leverage data from other monitoring systems in order to distinguish programs that have been identified as having existing high quality. That will enable the STARS Redesign Team to, in the first year of the project, design entry points for programs already monitored by State and Federal entities, minimizing duplication of efforts and maximize existing resources.

In particular, Head Start and State-funded preschool programs go through an extensive review process conducted by the Federal Office of Head Start and the Department of Education, respectively. Head Start programs are monitored every three years by federal teams to ensure that Head Start grantees are following the extensive Head Start Performance Standards. This process is called the Triennial Review Federal review teams conduct an exhaustive review of grantees from their fiscal practices, quality in classrooms, condition of facilities, staff and educator qualifications and more.

Likewise the State-funded Preschool programs are monitored for quality by a process referred to as the Preschool Program Review or the P2R. The P2R, like the Head Start Triennial process monitors preschool programs for a number of quality measures to ensure that the program is adhering to State preschool regulations. The P2R process also conducts environmental ratings of classrooms using the ECERS environmental rating tool. These ratings are utilized to inform districts and promote continuous program improvement. Preschool programs receive a P2R site visit once every five years.

Kentucky's High Quality Plan to implement the expanded STARS rating systems is to take advantage of data collected from the P2R and the Triennial review process to create **alternate pathways** into the system. The STARS Redesign Team will, in the first year, work with State partners to create a crosswalk document to identify which indicators to quality are already monitored in the P2R and the Head Start Triennial review process. This important work will

inform the STARS Redesign Team as to which quality level Head Start and State-funded preschool programs should enter the new system.

Currently in Kentucky the STARS rating system is a voluntary system. The voluntary classification resides in Kentucky statute. In order for Kentucky's vision to become reality, that statute will require revision. Therefore in the first year of the Kentucky All★STARS the Governor's Office of Early Childhood will work with the Governor's Office and the Kentucky General Assembly to make the appropriate alterations to the statute. Regulatory change is needed as well to facilitate Kentucky's plan. Therefore the Governor's Office of Early Childhood will work with the Division of Regulated Child Care to revise regulations to require licensing for two or more unrelated children.

As described in section B1, Kentucky's High Quality Plan to implement the newly expanded TQRIS consists of two phases that start with a yearlong planning period followed by a yearlong pilot and evaluation period. In the final quarter of the planning period, the STARS Redesign Workgroup will establish the parameters and the scope of the pilot and evaluation period. Also during this timeframe, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) will hire an additional 50 Quality Coordinators to being their training for the Statewide rollout of the newly designed system. Similarly, the migration of all Early Learning and Development programs into the new mandatory system will take place in phases. The first phase of the migration will focus on moving State-funded preschool programs into the expanded STARS quality rating system. The second phase scheduled to take place in the second quarter of the third project year will focus on migrating all Early Learning and Development Programs that are currently participating in STARS over to the new TQRIS. Next, licensed but unrated programs will be migrated; this will occur as their licenses expire and need to be renewed. The fourth and final phase would focus on moving registered providers (Family, Friend and Neighbor Care) into the System. We anticipate the migration of all Early Learning and Development Programs into the newly expanded STARS rating system will conclude in the **third quarter of the 4th year of the project**.

In layman's terms? The expanded STARS cannot be a one-size-fits-all system, but it must result in a **one-system-tells-all** tool for parents.

Creating these much-needed alternate pathways for TQRIS for programs that will both respect these systems and their quality assurances, and

critically, **simplifies the choices for parents** is certainly our aim. In layman's terms? The expanded STARS cannot be a one-size-fits-all system for early care and development programs, but it must result in a **one-system-tells-all** tool for parents.

**(B)(2)(b) Implementing effective policies and practices to help more families afford…**

Kentucky's publicly-funded preschool and Head Start programs, by virtue of their charge and funding, are free to families based on eligibility criteria for program participation. Child Care, being a private, provider-based service is not a free service to families. High Need families and their children have child care needs which sometimes expand beyond the typical day and time frames of the preschool and Head Start operating hours. This results in a cost burden for many families, as child care fee structures are individualized and not regulated. Often, the result is many high needs families choose lower quality programs due to decreased program fees.

Currently, families eligible for a subsidy are required to pay a co-pay. Co-pay amounts for families are determined on a sliding scale based on a number of family factors (e.g., household composition, monthly income, etc.). Therefore, co-pay amounts would be lower for families with High Needs. In some cases, co-payments are waived if the family is very low-income or particularly at risk; that is a decision typically made from one provider to another.

Kentucky's High Quality Plan to ensure families have access to high quality care will first ensure our commitment that co-payments for subsidy reflect the status of each individual families. Second, Kentucky will create a bold, innovative plan to **tie subsidy payments to the expanded STARS** tiered quality rating system. Subsidy reimbursements will be tiered, based on the level of quality that a program has achieved. This newly designed reimbursement system will be tiered according to the STARS rating, with the differentials in reimbursements being based on the level of quality. The current system reimburses based on individual indicators of quality **not** the STARS rating itself and may even benefit unrated programs.

There is also commitment in Kentucky that programs offering services to Infants and Toddlers will be compensated at a higher rate to ensure access to families with Children with High Needs seeking infant/toddler services. This plan will provide additional incentives for programs that progress to the next level of quality. This combined with Kentucky's commitment to keeping co-payments low, results in families with High Needs having affordable access to higher quality care.

**(B)(2)(c) Setting targets for the numbers and percentages of ELD programs in the TQRIS**

Our High Quality Plan to expand our existing quality tiered rating and improvement system (STARS) will move 100 percent of all licensed early learning and development programs to our TQRIS program by making participation mandatory. Further, all early learning and development programs caring for two or more non-related children – including public preschool and Head Start – will be required under a revised statute to become licensed. As indicated below, we will move from just 41 percent of our early learning and development programs participating (voluntary) to 100 percent under the expanded STARS rating system (mandatory).

| **Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State** | **Number of programs in the State** | *Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System* | | | | | | | | | |
| | | **Baseline (Today)** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2014** | | **Target -end of calendar year 2015** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2016** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2017** | |
| | | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** |
| State-funded preschool *Specify*: | 570 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 570 | 100% | 570 | 100% | 570 | 100% |
| Early Head Start and Head Start[1] | 197 | 136 | 69% | 136 | 69% | 136 | 69% | 197 | 100% | 197 | 100% |
| Programs funded by IDEA, Part C | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Programs receiving CCDF funds: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Care Licensed | 1493 | 632 | 42% | 632 | 42% | 632 | 42% | 1493 | 100% | 1493 | 100% |
| Child Care Registered | 528 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 528 | 100% |
| Programs **NOT** receiving CCDF funds: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Care Licensed | 451 | 121 | 27% | 121 | 27% | 121 | 27% | 451 | 100% | 451 | 100% |
| Child Care Certified *(includes programs receiving CCDF and not receiving CCDF)* | 519 | 95 | 18% | 95 | 18% | 95 | 18% | 519 | 100% | 519 | 100% |
| **Total of All Early Learning and Development Programs** | 3758 | 984 | 26% | 984 | 26% | 1554 | 41% | 3758 | 100% | 3758 | 100% |
| *Baseline data are actual. Methodology used to collect the data included: data pull from the KICCS Active Provider Directory, data pull from the Kentucky Department of Education and comparison data with the Head Start State Collaboration Office.* | | | | | | | | | | | |

[1] Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

| **Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State** | **Number of programs in the State** | *Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System* | | | | | | | | | |
| | | **Baseline (Today)** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2014** | | **Target -end of calendar year 2015** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2016** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2017** | |
| | | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** |
| *State-funded preschool programs include both Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 and Programs funded under Title I of ESEA, along with those Head Starts as explained below.*<br>*Note that Head Start and Early Head Start programs, as labeled in this table, are licensed under the Kentucky Child Care Regulations. All other Head Start and Early Head Start programs are blended with State-funded preschool programs.*<br>*Data is not provided for Programs funded by IDEA, Part C because Kentucky has chosen not to include our First Steps Early Intervention or HANDS home visitation programs.*<br>*Specific data is not provided for Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 or Programs funded under Title I of ESEA because both of these programs are included in State-funded preschool, as noted above.*<br>*In Kentucky, programs that receive CCDF Funding can be either certified or licensed and data pulled for these programs is separate because they will be targeted differently.* | | | | | | | | | | | |

## (B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs

As described in (B)(1) and (B)(2), Kentucky has multiple systems to monitor Early Learning and Development Programs and ensure programs meet a minimum set of requirements – licensing/certification/regulation for child care, Preschool Program Review (P2R) for state-funded preschool, and federally-managed monitoring systems for Head Start and First Steps.

### (B)(3)(a) Uses a Valid and Reliable Tool for Monitoring…

All monitored programs use valid, reliable Measures of Environmental Quality, including the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- revised, or ECERS. For licensed child care programs participating in STARS, similar tools are also used (and vary for different age groups of children and program types) to rate these programs. STARS rating information is currently available publicly through the STARS website. In October 2011 the Division of Child Care released a new online tool that was designed to improve the interface of the system where parents can search for child care in their area. The result was an easy to use interface where parents could quickly access their child care options.

The STARS system uses multiple valid and reliable observational tools for monitoring programs (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FDCRS, SACERS), trained monitors with high levels of inter-rater reliability, and at a frequency depending on a program's tier. The current tools are ECERS-R Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scales-revised (ITERS-R), Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS), and the School-Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS). Because STARS includes both center-based and home-based programs, it is necessary to include a multitude of measures to cover all age ranges and types of programs in the system.

In 2011, the evaluation conducted by Child Trends of Kentucky's STARS rating system noted that the program's strength was our use of valid and reliable tools (Appendix). A further strength noted was the strong system of inter-rater reliability currently in place to ensure accurate use of the tools.

In short, we have **13 years of experience** administering a system that produces valid and reliable results from valid and reliable tools. The STARS Redesign Workgroup will continue that strong commitment to integrity as they consider the design of the expanded STARS system. Kentucky has a commitment to utilize valid and reliable tools that accurately rate Early Learning and Development environmnets. In addition, it is anticipated that the new system will utilize

tools that rate the quality of adult child interaction. It is therefore Kentucky's high quality plan to adopt valid and reliable tools for the expanded TQRIS.

As noted by the 2011 Child Trends evaluation, we have a strong history of ensuring that individuals that utilize rating tools are producing valid and reliable results. This is referred to as establishing inter-rater reliability. As noted above, the current STARS system utilizes the Environmental Rating Scales as the measure for environmental quality. The Division of Child Care contracts with the University of Kentucky to employee approximately 24 staff (STARS Quality Coordinators) designated to provide technical assistance to those wishing to enter the STARS program. Also, 10 STARS Raters are employed to conduct the actual rating visit for a "score". An additional 4 staff identified as STARS anchors are charged with ensuring reliability on the Environmental Rating Scales across the technical assistance staff and the 10 STARS raters.

The reliability for Raters and STARS Quality Coordinator's are the same. Once hired, the employee must complete Inter-rater reliability (IRR) with a STARS anchor until he/she has reached 90% reliability across three of the four scales. This process is part of the reliability plan for each scale (ITERS, ECERS, SACERS, FDCERS). At that point, different scales are used quarterly for IRR and the 85 percent reliability must be maintained. If an employee falls below a reliability of 85 percent, they must go through a training plan and start the reliability over.

Environmental Rating Scales are to be conducted annually by providers regardless of STARS level. Environmental Ratings are conducted by the state on a frequency mirroring the STARS level. For example, a four STARS center will receive a "state" ERS every 4 years.

Likewise the Kentucky Department of Education utilizes valid and reliable tools in the Preschool Program Review or P2R. Regional Training Center staff (RTCs) have received training and have become reliable in the use of the ECERS-R in order to evaluate the quality of State-funded Pre-K classrooms. As part of the P2R monitoring visit, preschool classrooms are observed and rated. The ratings are shared with teachers and teacher leaders to establish a process that promotes continual improvement. All of Kentucky's 173 districts also utilize rating tools to conduct self evaluations outside the P2R process.

Kentucky's plan will continue to ensure that individuals using the rating tools produce valid and reliable results. The STARS Redesign Workgroup will, in the first year of the project, develop a plan that merges inter-rater reliability activities conducted by the Cabinet for Health

and Family Services and the Kentucky Department of Education. That is, we will bring all raters together to ensure cross-sector reliability.

**(B)(3)(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents**

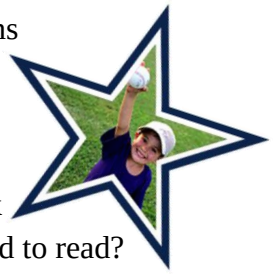
When Connie Johnson isn't busy working, she is taking care of her family. She goes to church. She goes to the grocery. She frequents yard sales looking for bargains. She takes Maya to soccer and sometimes to the Saturday Story Time at the library. And when she makes her almost daily trip to the laundry mat in her apartment complex, she keeps up with family and friends via Facebook or "chats" with her sister in Nashville. What she does not do is spend a lot of time researching strategies to support emergent literacy skills. To say she doesn't care about that would be incorrect; but it is appropriate to say she is not aware of the way young children learn and how explicit instructional strategies may be used to accelerate that learning.

The message of Kentucky All★STARS will reach Connie wherever she may be on a given day through a diversified marketing campaign that includes traditional and non-traditional communication avenues. The Early Childhood Advisory Council will work with state marketing professionals to complete the branding of Kentucky All★STARS and then design a campaign to tell families all about the STARS being posted around town. This will include, at a minimum, the following:

**Rating signage.** When Connie Johnson drives past an early learning and development program, she will easily be able to see its STARS rating of quality. Signage will include elements of the overall brand – color, logo, pithy saying – and will clearly display the number of stars achieved in the rating system. Signs will be easily seen from a car as it pulls up to the front entrance, as it must be displayed near the early care program's front door. Just as the rating system will be mandatory for all, the posting of STARS signage will be required. Materials will be forwarded to each early care facility with clear posting instructions and will be updated annually to ensure all programs are posting the appropriate rating.

**Print, television, radio.** Signs to post the ratings are only the first step; we must make sure parents understand the rating system. We will develop and publish traditional media messaging for television and radio (public service announcements) and forward high-resolution imaging and flyers to all state agencies for inclusion in other documents for low-income

families. Our taglines will be seen and heard statewide; for example, as Connie takes Knox to the health department for his 3-year boosters, she will receive the flyer – which will also be posted prominently in each exam room. We will also make sure pediatricians and obstetricians statewide receive the flyers and help us communicate the program to their parents.



**Partner support.** The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) will also help us market the expanded rating system to parents. The DCBS has locations in each Kentucky county and coordinates support services for low-income families, including TANF and SNAP. The DCBS will become a key distribution point for information on the rating system, answering questions and referring parents as needed to Kentucky All★STARS program staff. In addition, the DCBS will collect and forward contact information to our programs as needed, allowing us to reach out to individual families. We will have more than 70 program staff members who will help coordinate the local efforts with families.

***DidUKno?***

- … using a cookbook encourages a child to read?
- … singing is a great way to build a child's vocabulary?
- … reading at bedtime is a treat; it becomes a positive ritual for children?
- … 3-year-olds should be able to name their colors?
- … displaying artwork or writing encourages children to keep creating?
- … shoe-tying is one of many ways we know a child is kindergarten-ready?

**Social media.** Though Connie Johnson doesn't have a computer at home (she uses one at the library on Saturday when her kids are in Story Time), she has a Smart Phone and knows how to use it. While this may seem odd to some – that a low-income, divorced mom of two would splurge on a Smart Phone – prioritizing this within her monthly expenditures makes perfect sense (Payne, 2005). Families in poverty live in the present; decisions are often made in the moment and are based on survival factors (gas to go to work vs. a rent payment) and entertainment (large-screen plasma TV with satellite in a two-bedroom apartment). Therefore, we will attack social media on a number of fronts, including but not limited to:

- e-messaging will provide information about available early learning and development programs and daily early learning tips for families customized to his/her child's age. This likely will include strategies to create teachable moments with young children; weekly

"DidUKno?" alerts with quick, research-based ideas for parents (note above); and reminders of learning benchmarks based on age.

- A Facebook page – similar to KY BabyNet – that becomes a forum for parents to seek and receive advice on early learning and development. The site will be managed by project staff, and we will establish incentives to encourage "likes" and sharing.
- Signage links via QR codes or other links. Each rating posted in an early learning and development care program's window will also have a QR code or link that will provide immediate information to parents regarding the most recent review and any relevant history pertaining to health and safety inspections, for example. The information will also be available on a website and at any DCBS facility. Calling the STARS 800 number will also be an avenue for answers. And all information will be provided in common language, not government-speak.
- An early learning blog with guest writers and quick links to topics of interest. In all, we anticipate our social media campaign to have in excess of 100,000 touch-points for families of low-income children, based on the existing hits and visits for our current web pages.

**Local Stores.** In addition to more traditional routes, we will **physically go where families go.** We will work with partner agencies, CECCs and FRYSCs to reach low-income parents in their home communities; partners will set up booths on the first day of each month at each local grocery, Wal-Mart or other highly trafficked business. This is a key outreach strategy of our Kentucky towns and communities: from the Girl Scouts selling cookies to local churches having bake sales, the front entrance of the local grocery is the best place to do it, and the first day of the month is the busiest.

**Churches.** In addition to the Wal-Mart, our small towns all have churches – big and small. As part of our outreach, we will work with faith-based organizations and houses of worship. Our local CECCs will help us identify and work with each congregation's leaders to place notices in their bulletins and give reminders from the pulpit. We will work to identify specific contacts within each church – such as deacons, women's groups, etc. – who can also take up our work either individually or as a group. Faith-based organizations play a key role in the lives of our communities, providing supports of every type; we will utilize their gathering points as well as their powerful promotion platforms to reach parents, grandparents and others.

**One call, texting networks.** Many school districts in Kentucky now utilize one-call phone or texting systems that can reach hundreds of families in an instant. Through our education partners, we will work to identify districts with this capacity and frame our taglines accordingly.

**Grandparents.** While we have no solid data, we anecdotally observe that our grandparents have a network of their own. By reaching out to organizations they frequent – senior citizens' groups, professional associations, civic organizations, etc. – we will also reach our youngest learners. Again, each community will have its own types of groups, and we will use our local CECCs and FRYSCs to help us determine and establish those connections.

Finally, in each county, the DCBS will keep on file all public records pertaining to individual early learning and development programs. These will be available to families in full and in a parent-friendly executive summary that will explain the history of each organization in clear, unbiased terms. The DCBS will also be able at any point to reach our program staff by phone; our staff will happily talk through the information either by phone or in person as needed.

## (B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality ELD programs for Children with High Needs

Kentucky is a state of small towns, rural counties, small cities and at least one metropolitan area. But what each of these areas has in common is poverty – deep, often generational poverty that provides barriers for families and their young children. As noted in Section A, Kentucky is ranked 48th out of 50 states in median household income and is 47th out of 50 states in the percentage of people over 25 who have completed high school. In addition, a greater proportion of children live in poverty in Kentucky (26 percent) than in all but six other states. More than half – 52 percent – of our children under 5 years of age live at 200% of the Federal poverty level (Table (A)(1)-1).

Our commitment through Kentucky All★STARS is clear: we will provide high-quality early learning and development programs for all children in the Commonwealth, including Children with High Needs.

### (B)(4)(a) Developing, implementing policies and practices that provide support, incentives…

The current TQRIS has a system of supports and incentives which promote entry and improvement within the rating system. These supports and incentives come in the form of technical assistance, training, consultation, monetary awards, and regular monetary incentives. In addition, when instances of new funding opportunities come along – mini-grants, pilot projects, etc. – STARS-rated early learning and development programs **always get first priority** in the choice consideration. Following, we provide detail of the system of supports in place in the current STARs for KIDS NOW program to promote continual improvement; these are ongoing **commitments that will be continued** within our expanded STARS.

- **Technical Assistance**. Technical assistance is provided to participants in the University of Kentucky's Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI). Approximately 25 Stars Quality Coordinators are charged with providing technical assistance to participants based on mutually agreed upon goals.

**Definition of "High Need"**

Kentucky defines high-need children as those who live in a very low-income family, who have a physical or mental disability, who are in the child welfare system, and/or who are children of teen parents. Income eligibility for most state subsidized programs is typically 100-150% of poverty; regardless of these factors, our RTT-ELC project will ensure **all** children have access to quality ELD programs.

A TA plan is developed jointly between participants and STARS Quality Coordinators (SQCs) and progresses toward goals that are tracked in a Quality Tracking System (QTS). Technical Assistance can range from Administrative TA for the Program Director to TA designed to improve environmental rating scores. Plans are regularly evaluated by QEI administrators to ensure progress towards goals is being met.

- **Needs Assessment**. The Technical Assistance Plan is initiated by QEI staff at the request of a provider. Responsibilities of the QEI representative and the program are documented in a timeline with specific steps that will be followed in pursuit of STARS participation. In addition, all scheduled TA services are documented. If a program is non-compliant with the TA Plan it could result in the TA process being halted.
- **Training**. The STARS for KIDS NOW Overview, a PowerPoint presentation developed in partnership with DCC and QEI, is offered face to face or online. The Overview is designed to familiarize providers with the program's goals and expectations. It satisfies the regulatory requirement that the center's director or an individual with decision-making authority such as the owner, board chair, or minister, attends an overview of STARS prior to program participation. QEI staff schedules all Overviews for participants and works in collaboration with PDs to present the material. Every attendee receives a certificate of Overview attendance. Additional training on a wide variety of subjects can be provided as identified in the TA plan. SQCs can provide the training to fill training needs as identified in the TA plan.
- **Monetary Awards**. Four different types of monetary awards are available to STARS-rated Type I licensed early care programs, STARS-rated Type II licensed early care centers, and STARS-rated Certified family early care homes. To the extent funds are available, the Initial Achievement Award, Annual Achievement Award, Annual Enhancement Award, and Quality Incentive Award are issued to STARS-rated providers. Payment of these awards ceases to occur upon the expiration date of the STARS rating certificate or due to other reasons such as a failure to submit an Interim Report, immediate closure or denial of re-licensure or recertification, causing a reduction in STARS Level. As an example, a mini-grant opportunity was recently posted to help purchase cribs for providers to meet new crib standards. The mini-grants were only given to STARS-rated centers to help promote and continue the high quality of care in light of the expense of purchasing new cribs.

- **Initial Achievement Award**. This award is calculated and paid to a STARS rated program the first time a STARS level is achieved. A program cannot receive this award for a level earned more than one time. The award includes the award amount for each STARS level up to and including the STARS level achieved. A DCC-410 STARS Initial Achievement Award Calculation Worksheet is utilized to calculate the amount of the award and this is mailed to the provider for their records.
- **Annual Achievement Award**. This award became effective July 2008 and is calculated and awarded to programs that maintain a STARS level 3 or 4 rating. This is intended to encourage programs to maintain high quality over time.
- **Annual Enhancement Award**. Another longtime award (July 2008), the Annual Enhancement Award is awarded to Type I licensed programs that maintain a STARS level 4 rating, offer health insurance to all employees, and pay no less than 50 percent of a single plan. This award is calculated and awarded to Type II licensed programs and Certified family child-care programs that maintain a STARS level 4 rating and receive higher than a 5.5 score on the environment rating scale.

In addition to these three awards, Quality Rated centers can receive a Quality Incentive Award. This award is calculated and paid to STARS Levels 2-4 programs that serve High Needs children in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). This award is based on enrollment and the number of CCAP children served at the time of the program's annual payment eligibility review during the program's STARS anniversary month.

These awards and incentives are but a bit of the evidence of our commitment to expanding our STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system. As detailed above, Kentucky has had a long commitment to providing a system of supports for participants in the TQRIS, providing a clear path to continually improve quality. Our High Quality Plan represents a continuation of that commitment.

The bold commitment Kentucky has made within this proposal is that all subsidy awards will be **tied directly to levels of Quality in the TQRIS**. Tiered subsidy reimbursements will be based on the level of quality a program has achieved. This newly designed reimbursement system will be tiered according to the STARS rating system designed through the STARS Redesign Team, with differentials in reimbursements based on the level of quality. This is

opposed to the current system that reimburses programs **not** participating in the TQRIS and reimburses based on individual indicators of quality, not the STARS rating itself. In addition, we are committed to further support programs that offer services to Infants and Toddlers; these will be compensated at a higher rate to ensure access to families with Children with High Needs who need infant/toddler services.

In Kentucky's High Quality Plan for the STARS Redesign, we, along with other state partners, will utilize the first year of the project to develop the plan to redesign the current tiered rating system. During the planning phase, more sophisticated analysis will be undertaken in order to refine the payment model. This will require extensive knowledge of the new rating requirements in order to determine the relative increases in cost that programs will incur as they seek to become STARS rated for the first time or to advance within the rating system.

In addition Kentucky will continue its commitment to Early Learning and Development programs in the STARS expanded rating system by providing high-quality training and technical assistance to promote continuous, ongoing improvement. Within the first year of the project, the STARS Redesign Workgroup will examine the current system of supports. But, to be very clear, participants in the newly redesigned TQRIS will **continue to receive** all of the support described above; the Redesign Team, working with the ECAC, will examine new ways to expand the system of supports by developing the **All STAR Flexible Rewards System**. This Reward System would reward programs for increasing their STARS rating, providing them with credits to be redeemed for scholarships, training opportunities, coaching and mentoring opportunities, and other enhanced supports. The STARS Redesign Team will craft a menu of available Flexible Rewards prior to adopting the new TQRIS to both support the marketing efforts and to ensure all supports are based on a participants levels of quality.

**(B)(4)(b) Developing, implementing policies and practices that provide support, incentives…**

A family's involvement in a child's education is a strong predictor of a child's success in school and beyond. As outlined in Section C4, Kentucky has a long history of supporting families. The current STARS quality rating system is an important part of that continuum of support and requires participants to organize and conduct activities to give families the opportunity to engage in their children's education. As our early learning and development programs progress up the scales to higher quality, requirements for the integration of family supports will increase.

Kentucky's High Quality plan to provide parents with additional supports through the newly redesigned Quality Rating system will dramatically increase the access our High Need families have to specific, community based resources and supports. Also detailed in section C4, Kentucky plans to implement the Strengthening Families framework statewide. Strengthening Families focuses on building family resiliency through a series of protective factors that will help at-risk families cope with the negative stress they often encounter. In addition, two of the specific Protective Factors – Social Connections and Concrete Support in Times of Need – will help our families access specific resources from community partners (i.e., local health departments, clothing and food banks, church support groups, mental health groups, etc.). Our CECCs will create a map of assets/resources in their communities and begin sharing that with families through early learning and development centers and our partners.

In addition, through our redesigned Quality Rating System, we will provide professional development to early childhood educators to help them integrate family supports and resources. **All** Early Childhood Educators will be trained in utilizing the Strengthening Families five protective factors in their day-to-day interactions with families. Our early care providers are often a family's leading social contact; parents often see their care provider multiple times every week. As detailed in B1, early care providers who demonstrate full implementation of Strengthening Families will earn additional points in the rating system.

**(B)(4)(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing…**

On the following two pages, we present the number of Early Learning and Development Programs we anticipate will be in the top tiers of our expanded STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system (c1) as well as the number of Children with High Needs will be enrolled in those top-tier programs (c2).

| Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Baseline (Today)** | **Target- end of calendar year 2014** | **Target- end of calendar year 2015** | **Target- end of calendar year 2016** | **Target- end of calendar year 2017** |
| **Total number of programs covered by the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System** | 899 | 899 | 1459 | 3663 | 3663 |
| **Number of Unrated programs** | 2774 | 2774 | 2204 | 0 | 0 |
| **Number of programs in Tier 1** | 95 | 95 | 95 | 2299 | 1117 |
| **Number of programs in Tier 2** | 543 | 543 | 543 | 543 | 1523 |
| **Number of programs in Tier 3** | 228 | 228 | 798 | 798 | 830 |
| **Number of programs in Tier 4** | 23 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 127 |
| **Number of Programs in Tier 5** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 66 |

*Include a row for each tier in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, customize the labeling of the tiers, and indicate the highest and lowest tier.*
*Baseline data are actual. Methodology used to collect the data included: data pull from the KICCS Active Provider Directory, data pull from the Kentucky Department of Education and comparison data with the Head Start State Collaboration Office.*

| **Performance Measures for (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.** | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State** | **Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State** | *Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System* | | | | | | | | | |
| | | **Baseline (Today)** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2014** | | **Target - end of calendar year 2015** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2016** | | **Target- end of calendar year 2017** | |
| | | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** | **#** | **%** |
| State-funded preschool *Specify*: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Early Head Start and Head Start[2] | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other *Describe:* | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *[Please list which tiers the State has included as "top tiers," indicate whether baseline data are actual or estimated; and describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information.]* | | | | | | | | | | | |

Data systems within the current STARS rating system are not capable of capturing these data currently. We will work with our early learning and development centers to collect baseline date in spring 2014.

[2] Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

## (B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of State TQRIS

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood is committed to a high-quality rating system for our early learning and development programs; validation is the only way to ensure our expanded STARS rating system will meet our high standards. As evidence of our commitment to the validation process, the GOEC has already undergone an evaluation of our existing STARS system, doing so with state funds to ensure our rating system was appropriate for our youngest children.

### (B)(5)(a) Validating, using research based measures…

In 2011 Kentucky's TQRIS was evaluated by Child Trends, a national evaluation and research firm dedicated to learning about children in the real world. Their approach is to consider the "whole child" and often work on behalf of policy makers who need to make critical decisions for children. One of their specialty areas is the validation of quality rating and improvement systems. Here we outline the 2011 Child Trends evaluation strengths:

**S1 Standards: The STARS standards are differentiated by program type.**

- Similar to other QRIS nationally, STARS articulates a set of program standards that are differentiated by program types including Type 1 and Type 2 child care centers as well as Certified Family Homes.
- This is an important recognition of the need to monitor and provide support quality in different types of early care and education settings using a common framework but articulating quality requirements that are appropriate for the setting.

**S2 Standards: The STARS standards demonstrate alignment with three quality areas: program structure, children's experiences in the environment, and health and safety.**

- The STARS standards (as well as items from the Environment Rating Scales and licensing regulations) address three foundational quality domains.
- STARS is supported by strong data systems that provide opportunities for tracking trends, managing the effective delivery of services and for validating the system's effectiveness. Continue to support these systems and their vital role in continuous program improvement of STARS.

- The data systems used to support STARS management and tracking are a strength of the system. They offer administrators and contract managers the opportunity to monitor important trends in quality ratings and to track the delivery of services that are provided. These functions are critical for assessing the validity of the overall system and its effectiveness in achieving its goals for families and children.

**S4 Rating Structure: The current rating structure is transparent and clear for programs.**

- Programs report that they understand the grids and the process of moving from one level to the next. This is a strength of a block rating design because the levels and their requirements are transparent for the participants.

**S5 – Rating Structure: Programs are clearly meeting quality standards above their current rating level.**

- The findings that many programs report that they meet standards at a higher level in STARS is a strength. Many programs in STARS engage in practices at a higher level of quality that can benefit children and families. This is an important finding to build upon when considering revisions of the structure.

**S6 – Technical Assistance: Providers report positive experiences with their SQCs. They are pleased with the level of attention and support they receive in STARS.**

- The providers participating in the Evaluation reported positive experiences with their SQCs. In addition to providing information about the types of activities they participated in with their SQC, providers also spoke about the motivational role of the SQC in supporting and encouraging their participation in STARS. Personal relationships that allowed providers to feel comfortable reaching out to their SQC with questions and concerns were cited by providers of each type and across each STARS level.
- Providers report receiving a variety of technical assistance from the SQCs. The SQCs provide coaching to assist with meeting Environment Rating Scale indicators. They also provide general support and information about STARS requirement, training opportunities and funding opportunities.

**S7 – Technical Assistance: SQCs provide a variety of technical assistance supports and improvement strategies.**

- SQCs report engaging in a wide variety of activities to support the providers on their caseload. These activities include the provision of resources on particular topics and on training, completing needs assessments and professional development plans, assisting with paperwork, observing the provider at work and giving them feedback and modeling best practices. SQCs report spending the most time and seeing the most benefit from activities related to improving scores on the Environment Rating Scales and observing providers in their work with children. These findings indicate that SQCs have a solid basis for engaging providers in more in-depth work related to curriculum and assessment for example.

**S8 – Promoting Participation: Participation in STARS is steadily increasing.**

- According to data from the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky, participation of eligible programs in STARS has steadily increased and was at 40% in September, 2011.
- This participation rate is significantly higher than the average rate documented in other voluntary QRIS (Tout et al., 2010).

**S9 – Promoting Participation: Rating process changes initiated by the Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care in 2010 appear to facilitate greater participation in STARS.**

- Changes made in 2010 to more efficiently link rating and licensing of programs appear to have facilitated an increasing number of programs in STARS.
- The changes reduced duplication of efforts among the different components of the rating process and allowed for a quicker and more efficient designation of the rating.

**S10- Collaboration and Coordination: Providers in STARS perceive the rating process to be fair. Acknowledge and build on providers' overall perception that the STARS rating process is fair as any changes are made to STARS.**

- The majority of providers interviewed in the Evaluation reported that the STARS rating process is totally or mostly fair. Providers stated that the STARS grid

requirements are clear and appropriate. Some also stated that SQCs are helpful in explaining the process to providers. It will be critical to build upon the success of STARS in garnering this positive perception by providers.

**S11 – Collaboration and Coordination: The coordination of technical assistance and supports for providers is functioning well. Acknowledge and build on providers' reports of positive experiences working with multiple Technical Assistance staff.**

- Overall, providers report that they hear consistent messages about quality from the different technical assistance partners they work with on quality improvement. Type I centers were more likely to report positive experiences, so it will be important to continue to improve upon coordination of messages with Certified Home providers.

**S12 - Collaboration and Coordination: TA staff are positive about their role in the system and their working relationships with each other. Acknowledge and build upon the positive perceptions of collaboration and coordination reported by SQs and PD Counselors.**

- SQCs and PD Counselors report that they have good working relationships with each other. This is a strength of current technical assistance efforts.

**S13 – Collaboration and Coordination: Provide ongoing opportunities for training on STARS and opportunities for input on STARS design and processes from Raters and SQCs.**

- Raters and SQCs express an interest in having additional opportunities to learn about STARS requirements and to provide their input and feedback on features of STARS. It will be beneficial to offer these opportunities to engage these critical members of the STARS rating and technical assistance process.

**S14 – Collaboration and Coordination: STARS is supported by strong data systems that provide opportunities for tracking trends, managing the effective delivery of services and for validating the system's effectiveness. Continue to support these systems and their vital role in continuous program improvement of STARS.**

- The data systems used to support STARS management and tracking are a strength of the system. They offer administrators and contract managers the opportunity to monitor important trends in quality ratings and to track the delivery of services that

are provided. These functions are critical for assessing the validity of the overall system and its effectiveness in achieving its goals for families and children.

In addition to the validation of our STARS for KIDS NOW rating system, we participated in a process evaluation. The study was initiated by the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care to provide an examination and assessment of existing STARS components and to provide a **basis for recommendations to improve STARS implementation statewide**. This summary provides an overview of key findings, strengths of the existing system and recommendations for areas to target for taking STARS to the next level of effectiveness.

Kentucky is unique nationally in its investment in a process evaluation to address a set of **comprehensive questions about the functioning of its QRIS after operating for over a decade**. For example, ours is the first QRIS in the nation to engage in a systematic, empirical examination of alternative models for the STARS rating process. The use of evaluation data to reflect on options for revisions and enhancement to STARS is a model that will be useful for other QRIS to follow. The findings provide the Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care with a comprehensive set of potential targets for improvements as STARS enters its second decade and as we consider expansion. The Evaluation also identifies existing processes that are working well and areas of strength on which revisions and modifications can be based. The Evaluation questions and activities focused on five broad, interrelated components of STARS:

- The quality standards and measurement strategies
- The rating structure and process for assigning STARS levels
- The technical assistance provided to promote improvement, and
- The outreach methods to promote STARS to providers and to parents
- The collaboration, coordination, and administrative processes most supportive for STARS.

One goal of the Process Evaluation was to examine the current STARS standards and identify how well the requirements match established standards and **expectations for the aspect of quality** that are most important for programs, families and children. This analysis involved the development of a crosswalk that systematically compared the grid requirements (including the Environment Rating Scales) with other quality frameworks used to guide best practice in Kentucky including the Kentucky Early Childhood Quality Self-Study (QSS), the Kentucky

Early Childhood Core Content (ECCC), national accreditation standards and quality standards included in other state QRIS as recorded by the Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations (Tout et al., 2010).

For each component, key findings were presented and recommendations offered that consider the current STARS context and implications for policy and regulatory changes.

**(B)(5)(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress…**

As noted immediately above, Kentucky has a history of utilizing evaluation and the data it produces to make changes for improvement. As our STARS Redesign Workgroup continues their work, they have at their side the findings of both the Child Trends validation and the University of Kentucky process evaluation.

Our evaluation methods will include a formative review related both to the intended outcomes and the implementation itself; a summative evaluation of the outcomes; and a separate implementation evaluation to determine the level of fidelity needed to achieve noted gains.

**Evaluation Questions.** The overarching questions guiding the evaluation are aligned to project goals and activities and to our established if / then statement, and will allow evaluators to document and explore the development of our partnership, investigate the implementation of the model, and measure project impact.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Our rationale** | **If…** | we require all early care programs to participate in a family-friendly, high-quality rating system with unmistakable levels of quality, |
| | **and…** | we directly support early care providers, providing them the ongoing coaching and support they need to improve the quality of their programs, |
| | **then…** | we will see an increase in the number of children – especially Children with High Needs – who have access to and participate in high-quality early learning programs, |
| | **which will…** | result in an increase in the number of children who are kindergarten ready. |

In addition, in considering the questions – or the answers – to be included in our evaluation process, we anticipate the evaluation will address the following key questions. The ECAC will work with our third-party evaluators to revise the questions as appropriate.

- What rating structure and process is most effective? (i.e., produces a valid rating that reflects the quality of programs, and promotes participation by programs across tier levels)
- What is the effect of high-quality learning environments on school readiness?
- How do providers perceive the current rating structure and process?
- Which parts of the current rating structure and process are challenging to providers? Or present barriers to participation?
- What are participants' reactions to and perceptions of the RTT-ELC project?
- To what extent is participants' knowledge of early learning strategies influenced by the project?
- What measures need to be updated? (The current STARS evaluation team from the University of Kentucky is assessing CLASS, ECERS, ITERS, FCCRS, SACCERS, and other tools and measures from other states)
- What additional aspects of quality could be included in the STARS standards?
- To what extent are the beliefs of early childhood educators, service providers, and families influenced by the project?
- To what extent are educational practices influenced by the project in each type of setting?
- To what extent do stakeholders support implementation of and participation in the project and subsequent changes in institutional policies and practices?
- To what extent is kindergarten readiness impacted by participants' involvement in the project?
- To what extent are parents' attitudes toward the learning of young children influenced by engagement activities in the project?

While the new Program Standards will represent integration across existing programs, they will not represent the "lowest common denominator." Rather, they will represent the highest expectations within each of the existing sets of Domains.

| Section B – High Quality, Accountable Programs Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Anticipated Award Date | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hire for the STARS Project Coordinator and KDE P2R Consultant | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>KY Department of Education |
| RTC P2R consultants hired | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | KY Department of Education |
| STARS Redesign Workgroup works on differentiated grids, establishing comparability across programs and raters | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association |
| Inter-rater reliability established | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association |
| STARS Redesign Workgroup establishes parameters for pilots to run in year 2 | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association |
| Legislation introduced to transition to mandatory participation in the TQRIS | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Regulation changed to require licensing for 2 or more unrelated children | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |

| Section B – High Quality, Accountable Programs Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Eight additional QEI anchors hired | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| 50 additional STARS Quality Coordinators hired | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| Pilot implemented in rated licensed programs | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| Pilot implemented in public programs | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association |
| 18 STARS Raters and management staff hired | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| STARS Redesign Workgroup and contracted evaluator evaluate the pilots and makes adjustments. | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association<br>Contract Evaluation Team |
| All public preschool and school based Head Start are brought into the TQRIS | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>KY Department of Education<br>KY Head Start Association |

| Section B – High Quality, Accountable Programs Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Licensed programs currently rated are integrated into new TQRIS | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Unrated licensed programs are integrated into new TQRIS as licenses renew. | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Registered Providers integrated into new TQRIS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| All programs receiving CCAP reimbursement are rated in accordance with CCDF requirements | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | Cabinet for Health and Family Services Governor's Office of Early Childhood |

# Section C1
# Early Learning & Development Standards

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

Connie remembers the morning Knox was born: it was bitterly cold, and Maya had not slept the night before due to a stomach bug. Connie remembers thinking, "Oh, not tonight. Please don't let this baby come tonight." But all her hoping and wishing did nothing to slow his progress. He was born at 6 pounds 5 ounces as the winds (and his sister) howled. What a night, she thinks.

But now, two years later, Knox is the one who cannot sleep, wanting his mom to read the story book one more time. He could practically read it himself, she thinks. Knox can recite all the words right along with her; she dare not skip a page or he will know. Yes, Knox is going to be the smart one. Looking at him, she worries that he is well ahead of Maya when she was this same age. What if he's super smart? Or what if she's wrong, what if he's just hyperactive? How is she supposed to know the difference? How will she be able to help him as he progresses through school?

Miss Anita has noticed as well; she tries to assure Connie that Knox is fine – but smart – and keeps reminding Connie to work with him on puzzles, to talk with him about colors and shapes and, well, something about how puzzles help with later math skills. And that just makes Connie worry all over again. How is she supposed to be able to help him if he really is as advanced as he seems to be? In fact, how is she supposed to even know what he should know?

Connie certainly isn't the first mom to worry about what a child knows and what s/he <u>should</u> know. In fact, that is one of the guiding factors of the educational system as we know it: specific principles or standards that lay out the specific bits of knowledge or the skills children should possess as they learn and grow. Not exactly a checklist, educational standards serve as a road map of sorts, providing direction in a particular content or skill area.

In 2003, Kentucky committed to the full implementation of Early Learning and Development Standards for young children – including those like Knox – by creating a series of documents referred to as the Building a Strong Foundation for School Success series. The Standards, which have since been twice revised, are a framework to help parents, early care, intervention, and education professionals, administrators, and others in understanding what children are able to know and do from birth through four years of age. This "content for learning" (Kendall, 2003) provides early care and education professionals and others – even moms like Connie – the knowledgeable they need to provide experiences that will help children reach their full potential.

**(C)(1)(a) Standards are developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate…**

Kentucky, like many other states, has realized the importance of developing a shared set of expectations for young children. Drawn from current research, Kentucky's Early Learning and Development Standards – called the **Kentucky Early Childhood Standards** – provide the foundation for competencies critical to ensuring later academic success (MA Dept. of Ed., 2001; MO Dept. of Ed., 2002: Prichard, 2000). The vision for Kentucky's young children and their families is that "all young children are healthy and safe, possess the foundation that will enable school and personal success, and live in strong families that are supported and strengthened within their communities" (Governor's Early Childhood Task Force, 1999).

To be clear, the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards are already fully in place and utilized throughout the Commonwealth. They were developed by an interdisciplinary team of early childhood experts and are presented in two sections: standards for children from birth to three and standards for three- and four-year-olds. The Standards document consist of standards, benchmarks, developmental continuum, and example behaviors, as described here:

- **Standard**: A general statement that represents the information, skills, or both that a child should know or be able to do.
- **Benchmark**: A subcomponent of a standard that translates the standard into what a child should understand or be able to do at a specific developmental level; much more specific than a standard. Benchmarks are not listed in any specific order, either in importance or in development.
- **Developmental Continuum**: A predictable, but not rigid, sequence of accomplishments which describes the progressive levels of performance in the order in which they emerge in most children. The continuum is based on current research.
- **Example Behaviors**: Observable "samples" of what children might do as they demonstrate accomplishments at each level of the developmental continuum, but not a definitive list of how a child might demonstrate a specific accomplishment nor is it an exhaustive inventory.

The Standards also have been reviewed by a panel of Kentucky early childhood experts and by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to ensure they are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate across all age groups. Indeed, our 2003 work team developed guiding principles for their work to ensure the standards would reflect developmental, cultural and linguistic appropriateness for all children including Children with

High Needs, children with disabilities, children with developmental delays, and English language learners (ELL). In particular, the following two principles apply to these special populations:

- **The individual developmental needs of children must be addressed**. The design of the Standards recognizes that children develop at different rates and may not reach developmental milestones in the same amount of time. This applies to children with disabilities or children with developmental delays as well as children who are developing more typically (as noted by Connie, as she compares Maya to young Knox). To provide this latitude, the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards continuum does not include specific age ranges. Rather, the design allows for flexibility in planning for children with a variety of individual learning needs. The alignment and purposeful overlap of the standards for Birth to 3 and the standards for 3- and 4-year-olds also allows for flexible curriculum planning both across and within each age group.
- **Understanding the ecological nature of early childhood and addressing the cultural needs of children and families is integral to quality in early childhood programs.** The Kentucky Early Childhood Standards were designed to recognize that the various contexts of a child's world –family, care and educational settings, community, and society – all have an impact on a child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1993; NAEYC, 1997). In addition, despite the relatively predictable sequences of growth in children during the early childhood years (Piaget, 1952; Erikson, 1963; NAEYC, 1997), a child's culture impacts and shapes his/her individual development. This certainly includes children who are from culturally diverse backgrounds and English language learners (ELL)

Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards were developed to cover all the five Essential Domains of School Readiness: Language and Literacy Development, Cognition and General Knowledge (including mathematics and early science development), Approaches Toward Learning, Physical Well-Being and Motor Development (including adaptive skills), and Social-Emotional Development. From the beginning effort in 2003 and through our most recent revisions in 2013, Kentucky has recognized that the development of the Standards must take this "whole child" approach. Two guiding principles speak directly to this point:

- **Social-emotional experiences and relationships are the foundation for child development**. The Standards were designed to recognize emphasized early social and emotional competence as the foundation for all later development (Chazan-Cohen, Jerald, & Stark, 2001, p. 4) and as a predictor of later success (Kontos & Wilcox-Herzog, 1997; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002

p. 8; Peisner-Feinberg, et.al., 2001). Further, a secure care-giving environment, supportive and nurturing interactions, and positive relationships between a young child and caregiver help the central nervous system develop appropriately (Brazelton & Greenspan, 2001, p. 1) and play a crucial role in promoting healthy social-emotional growth (Chazan-Cohen, Jerald, & Stark, 2001, p. 7; Cohen & Kaufmann, 2000; Greenspan, 1992).

- **The interaction and influence among developmental domains must be considered in addressing program and child needs and outcomes**. The Standards were designed to recognize that young children's development is strongly interconnected, as outcomes in one area rely on development in other areas (Kendall, 2003). Development in one domain (motor, social-emotional, cognitive, communication) can limit or facilitate development in another.

These guiding principles demonstrate the importance Kentucky applied to ensure all of the Essential Domains of School Readiness were included in the Early Childhood Standards. In fact, in 2009, the Standards were revised by a team of multiple stakeholders to include a specific section on Approaches Toward Learning. This revision was a reflection of research indicating that Approaches Toward Learning is one of the most important domains of school readiness (Kagan, Moore & Bredekamp, 1995). The group identified examples of approaches to learning across the developmental domains including: Initiative and Curiosity, Persistence and Attentiveness, and Cooperation. The Standards were further revised in 2013 to specifically call out the Approaches Toward Learning example behaviors for Early Childhood Educators. The 2013 revisions also re-aligned the Standards to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and included information regarding Kentucky's newly developed Kindergarten Readiness definition, which fully aligns with the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards. The illustration below (Figure 1.1) provides examples by each Essential Domain to further demonstrate how Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards comprise each domain.

| Essential Domain: Language and Literacy Development | | | | | | Figure 1.1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Language Arts):**<br>Demonstrates general skills and strategies of the communication process. | | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Uses non-verbal communication for a variety of purposes. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | | |
| | | **Strand** | Speaking and Listening | **Language Development** | Expressive Language | |
| | | **Cluster** | Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas | **Creative Arts Expression** | Drama | |
| **Essential Domain: Approaches Toward Learning** | | | | | | |
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Social Studies):**<br>Demonstrates basic understanding of the world in which he/she lives. | | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Uses environmental clues and tools to understand surroundings. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | | |
| | | **Big Idea** | Geography; Information, Communication & Productivity - Primary Skills & Concepts - Information; Research, Inquiry/Problem-Solving & Innovation; Primary Skills & Concepts - Research | **Science Knowledge and Skills** | Scientific skills and methods, conceptual knowledge of the natural and physical world | |
| **Approaches to Learning** | Persistence and Attentiveness | | | **Approaches to Learning** | Initative and curiosity; cooperation | |

| Essential Domain: Cognition and General Knowledge | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Mathematics):**<br>Demonstrates general skills and uses concepts of mathematics. | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Demonstrates an understanding of numbers and counting. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | |
| | | **Domain** | Counting and Cardinality | **Mathematics Knowledge and Skills** | Number concepts and quantities |
| | | **Clusters** | Know number names and the counting sequence, compare numbers, count to tell the number of objects | | |
| | | **Domain** | Measurement and Data | | |
| | | **Clusters** | Describe and compare measurable attributes, classify objects and count the number of objects in each category | | |
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Science):**<br>Demonstrates scientific ways of thinking and working (with wonder and curiosity) | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Explores features of the environment through manipulation. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | |
| | | **Big Idea** | Transformation of matter (physical science); motion and forces (physical science); the earth & the universe (earth & space science); energy transformation (unifying concepts) | **Science Knowledge and Skills** | Scientific skills and methods, knowledge of the natural and physical world, |
| | | | | **Approaches to Learning** | Initiative and curiosity, engagement and persistence |
| | | | | **Logic and Reasoning** | Reasoning and problem solving |

| Essential Domain: Physical Well being and Motor Development | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Physical):** Demonstrates basic gross and fine motor development. | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Performs a variety of locomotor skills with control and balance. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | |
| | | **Big Idea** | Psychomotor skills (Physical Education) | **Physical Development and Health** | Physical Health Status/Gross Motor Skills |
| **Essential Domain: Social and Emotional Development** | | | | | |
| **KY Early Childhood Standards 1 (Health, Mental Wellness):** Demonstrates basic gross and fine motor development. | | | | | |
| **Benchmark 1.1** | Demonstrates Independent Behavior. | **K-12 Kentucky Core Academic Standards** | | **Head Start Child Dev. and Early Learning Framework** | |
| | | **Big Idea** | Personal Wellness (Health Education) - Primary Skills and Concepts - Personal and Physical Health; Personal Wellness (Health Education) - Primary Skills and Concepts - Communicable, Non-Communicable and Chronic Diseases Prevention; Nutrition (Health Education); Safety (Health Education); Lifetime Physical Wellness (Physical Education) | **Physical Development and Health** | Physical Health Status, Health Knowledge and Practice |

**(C)(1)(b) Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards…**

In the spring of 2011, the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards were aligned to Kentucky's Core Academic Standards (KCAS) for English/Language Arts and Mathematics[1], a move necessitated in part by the new common core standards adopted in those areas. In addition, the revision helped us further ensure young children would have a smooth transition as they move into kindergarten and beyond. The revision workgroup was convened by the Kentucky Department of Education and included preschool and kindergarten teachers, representatives of child care and Head Start, administrators and state agency staff members. The purpose of the group was to align the Standards with the expectations the KCAS adopts for students in kindergarten. The newly aligned Standards represent a document that supports Early Childhood Educators as they plan curriculum and instruction for all children in Early Learning and Development environments.

Figure 1.2 is an example taken from the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards (2013) for 3- and 4-Year-Olds; it demonstrates how the alignment references are made for Early Childhood Educators. The Standards document includes a column on the right for teacher note-taking.

*Figure 1.2*

| **English/Language Arts Standard 3:**<br>Demonstrates general skills and strategies of the reading process.<br>**Benchmark 3.6:** Tells and retells a story. | |
|---|---|
| **Developmental Continuum and Example Behaviors** | **Comments, Notes, Strategies** |
| Retells a story including many details and draws connections between story events.<br>**Example**: After hearing the story of "Pepe the Bull" Phillip tells the story to the stuffed animals in the quiet area. (Approaches to Learning: Persistence and Attentiveness)*<br>* *Reference to **Approaches Toward Learning** Domain* | |

**Alignment references**

*Kentucky Core Academic Standards:*

→ (Strand) Reading (Cluster) Key Ideas and Details (Literature and Informational), (Cluster) Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Literature and Informational)

*Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework:*

→ Literacy Knowledge & Skills – Book Appreciation

1 Kentucky was the first state to fully adopt the new Common Core Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics.

To further support educators in understanding how the Standards align with the KCAS, the Kentucky Department of Education produced two alignment documents that detail how the Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts align with the standards in the KCAS. Figures 1.3 and 1.4 are samples of the **alignment crosswalk** from each of these documents. Figure 1.5 is a graphic that details how the Kentucky Early Learning Standards have been aligned with the KCAS. The full documents can be found in the Appendix.

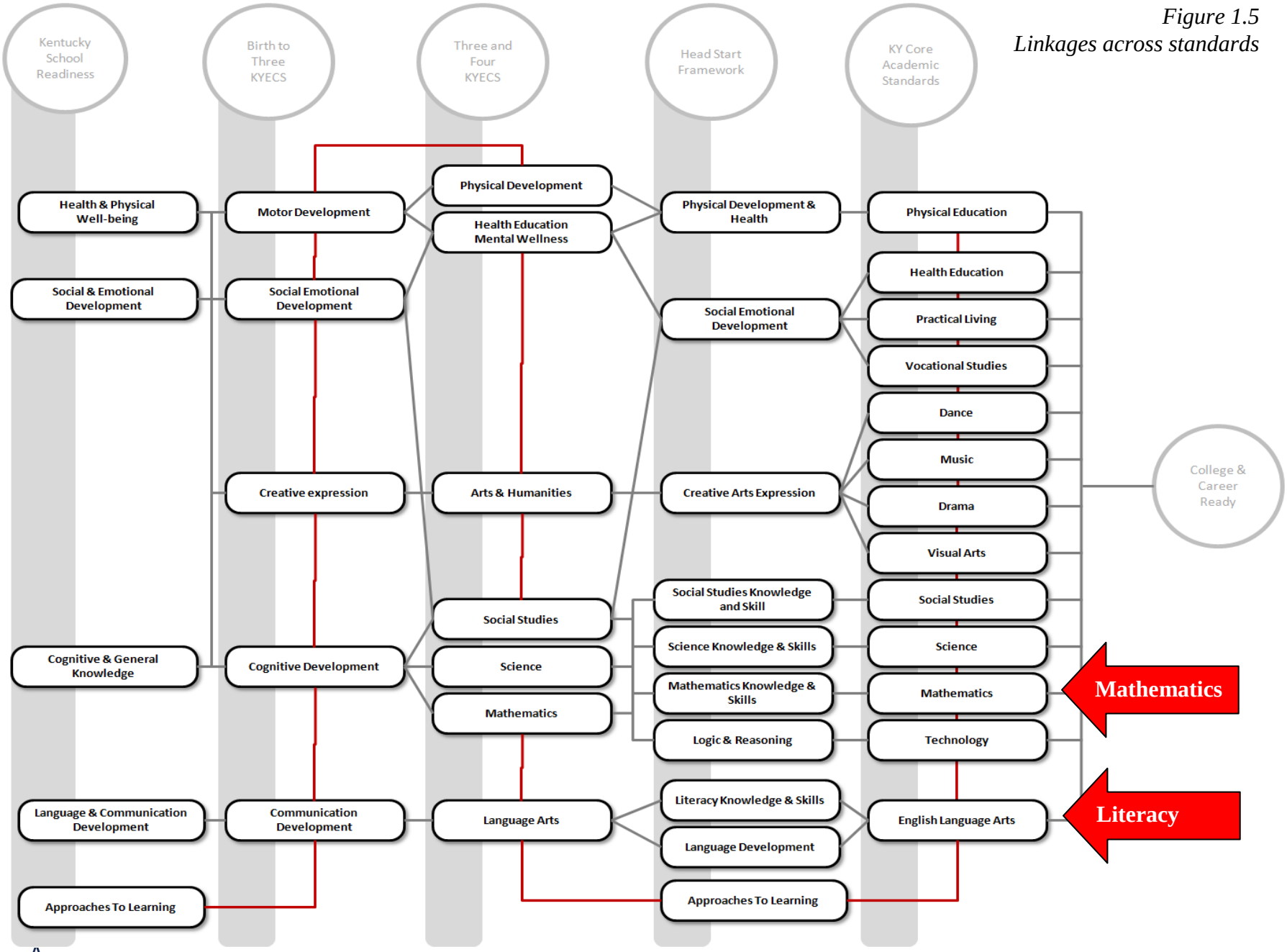
*Figure 1.3 – KECS-KCAS Math Alignment*

| **Kentucky Early Childhood Standard (KYECS)**<br>MATHEMATICS (3S AND 4S) | **Kentucky Core Academic Standard (KCAS) Math for Kindergarten** | |
|---|---|---|
| **Standard 1: Demonstrates general skills and uses concepts of mathematics.** | | |
| Benchmark 1.1: Demonstrates an understanding of numbers and counting. | **Domain**<br>Counting and Cardinality | |
| Developmental Continuum Items | | |
| • Imitates rote counting using the names of the numbers. | **(Domain) Counting and Cardinality**<br>**(Cluster) Know number names and the count sequence.**<br>1. Count to 100 by ones and by tens.<br>2. Count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence (instead of having to begin at 1). | **NOTES** |

*Figure 1.4 – KECS-KCAS English Language Arts*

| **Kentucky Early Childhood Standard (KYECS) for three and four year olds** | **Kentucky Core Academic Standard (KYCAS) for Kindergarten** | **NOTES** |
|---|---|---|
| **English/Language Arts Standard 1: Demonstrates general skills and strategies of the communication process.**<br><br>**Benchmark 1.2: Uses language (verbal, signed, symbolic) for a variety of purposes.**<br><br>**Developmental Continuum**<br>• Initiates communication to have needs met.<br>• Responds meaningfully in conversations and discussions with peers and adults.<br>• Asks many why, when, and where questions.<br>• Uses words, signs, and/or symbols to effectively express feelings and thoughts, describe experiences, interact with others, and/or communicate needs.<br>• Adjusts expressive techniques (pitch, intonation, pace) for a variety of purposes. | **(Strand) Language**<br>**(Cluster) Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**<br>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.<br>• Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing *duck* is a bird and learning the verb to *duck*).<br>• Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., *-ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less*) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.<br>5. With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.<br>• Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.<br>• Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).<br>• Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).<br>• Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., *walk, march, strut, prance*) by acting out the meanings.<br>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.<br><br>**(Strand) Speaking and Listening**<br>**(Cluster) Comprehension and Collaboration**<br>1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *kindergarten topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.<br>• Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).<br>• Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.<br>2. Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.<br>3. Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood. | |

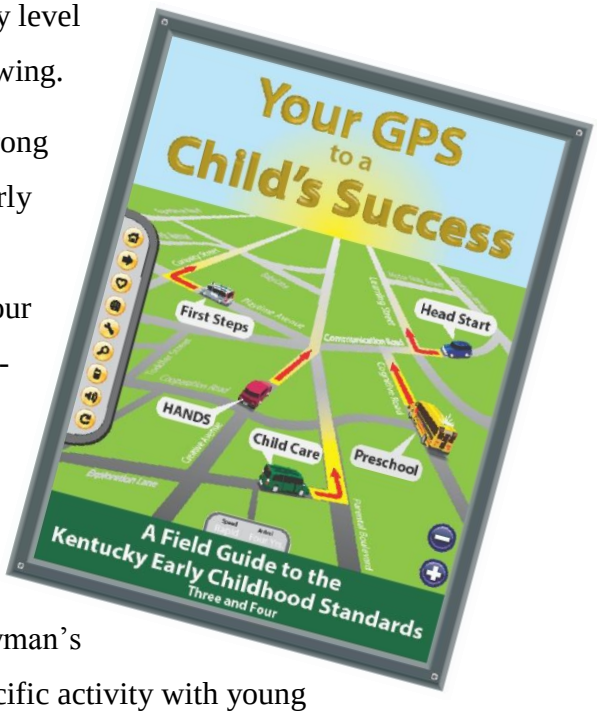
*Figure 1.5*
*Linkages across standards*



**(C)(1)(c) ELD Standards are incorporated in the Program Standards, curricula, …**

We ensure the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards are widely used, and we have done so for more than a decade. In addition, during this time we have embedded the Standards in each and every professional development opportunity with Early Childhood Educators in all three realms – child care, Head Start and public pre-K. Here we outline how the Standards will continue to be the foundation for professional learning across the Commonwealth.

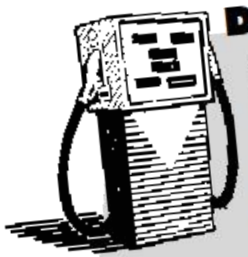
**Program Standards.** In Section B, we detail how the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards will be integrated in the expanded STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) system to further guarantee educators have explicit and intentional, high-quality opportunities for training to implement and understand the Standards. The expanded STARs system will include all Early Learning and Development environments and will support the growth of quality for Educators by providing free, standards-based training to all. The system will further ensure quality by **providing incentives** to participants who fully utilize and integrate the Standards in their everyday lesson planning, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Additional information about how Kentucky All★STARs integrates the Standards at every level of program implementation is found in Section B and following.




**Curricula and Activities.** In addition to the Building a Strong Foundation series, the Commonwealth has released The Early Childhood Field Guide, an electronic, printable guide for implementing the standards with young children (birth to four years old; see p. 151). Created in 2010, the guide is an easy-to-read, practical supplement to the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards that provides **easy-to-replicate activities for each and every standard.** In fact, the chapter structure aligns to the each set of standards (Language Arts, Math, Science, etc.), then provides – in layman's terms – what educators should see as they implement a specific activity with young children. Each chapter includes lists of books for young children and educators that support that standard, songs for children to sing, specific activities, and even a "quote" from a child that represents what a child might be thinking/saying as she or he grasps the new concept.

Pages from, "A Field Guide to the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards: Three to Four"





## Don't forget to refuel!

### Resource Books:

- Count on math: Activities for Small Hands and Lively Minds – Pam Schiller
- The Young Child and Mathematics – Juanita Copley
- The Cooking Book – Laura Colker
- Showcasing Mathematics for the Young Child 2 - Juanita Copley

### Books:

123 to the Zoo – Eric Carl
The Very Hungry Catepillar – Eric Carl
I-Spy Books – Jean Marzollo
The Napping House – Audrey Wood, Don Wood
How Much is a Million? – David Schwartz
Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday – Judith Viorst

### Song Ideas:

Up and down, round and round

Up and down, round and round *(draw circles in the air)*, put your fingers on the ground.
Over *(hold hands above lap)* under, *(below legs)* in between *(you've hidden your hands in between your legs)*
Now my fingers can't be seen!
Hands in front, hands behind , now my hands I cannot find.
Here's my left hand , here's my right,
Hands and fingers back in sight *(wriggle fingers)*.

More Songs: Lyrics to these and more at www.preschooleducation.com

- Five Green and Speckled Frogs
- There Were Ten in the Bed

### Activity:

Watermelon Math

- Provide child with a string and wrap around melon before cutting it. Help child cut string to that length then use it to measure other things in the room to see what is bigger, smaller or the same as the melon.
- Give each child a slice of watermelon. Allow child to predict how many seeds they will find. Write down their predictions. Help them count their seeds when they are done and compare the actual number to their prediction.

"Guess how long I am, Mom?" says Jenna. When mom asks, "I don't know. How long are you?" Jenna says "6 toy dinosaurs long!" pointing to a row of toy dinosaurs lying on the floor with a proud grin. Then she quickly lay down next to the row of dinosaurs and squealed, "See?"

## We know children are on their way when they...

1. Imitates rote counting using the names of the numbers
2. Counts in sequence to 5 and beyond
3. Arranges sets of objects in one-to-one correspondence
4. Understands that a single object is always "one" regardless of size, shape, other attributes
5. Counts concrete objects to 5 and beyond
6. Uses math language to express quantity in everyday experiences.
7. Compares concrete quantities to determine which has more
8. Recognizes that a set of objects remains the same amount if physically rearranged
9. Realizes that the last number counted is the total amount of objects
10. Recognizes some numerals and associates number concepts with print materials in a meaningful way
11. Names and writes some numerals
12. Recognizes some basic shapes
13. Creates and duplicates shapes
14. Completes simple puzzles.
15. Identifies shapes
16. Recognizes parts of a whole
17. Recognizes the position of objects
18. Uses words that indicate directionality, order or position of objects
19. Matches objects
20. Sorts objects by one or more attributes
21. Describes objects by one or more attributes
22. ecognizes, duplicates and extends simple patterns
23. ates original patterns
24. pare and orders by size
25. ools to explore measuring
26. , compares and describes length, weight or volume
27. standard units
28. mpares and describes length, weight or volume
29. d units
30. ss of simple time concepts
31. equences time intervals and uses language
32. ne in everyday situations.

## We know adults help children get there by...



| | |
|---|---|
| 1-5<br>9 | Have many materials that can be counted, such as counting bears, balls and blocks. |
| 1-6<br>9 | Count with the child, whether it be the number of steps you are taking or while you are setting the table or passing out napkins. |
| 1-9<br>19,20<br>24 | Point to individual objects when counting 6: Use descriptive language with children and read books that promotes mathematical thinking, such as big and small, too much, too little, more, less, etc. |
| 19-27 | Point out and ask child to make comparisons around in the environment. Ask the child who has more crackers or which shoe is bigger. Play games that use comparisons such as more and less |
| 10-11 | Point out numbers in your environment, such as on signs, clocks, or books. Let child watch you write numbers in everyday activities (writing lists).As children develop, provide opportunities to write the numbers on paper. |
| 12-16 | Provide opportunities to explore shapes in the environment. Describe the shapes and their attributes. Encourage children to identify shapes and create shapes with materials or. |
| 15,16 | Provide materials such as play pizza or a piece of paper torn into two or more pieces to visualize whole and part. Provide simple puzzles for young children to work with. When putting puzzles together, talk to child about size and shape of puzzle. |
| 22, 23 | Provide materials for young children to match and create simple patterns with (big, small, big, small,) or (red, yellow, red, yellow…). Use different colored cups, napkins etc. at meals or other items around the house to point make and point out patterns. Offer a variety of toys or materials that children can create their own patterns with, such as cheerios and raisins or multi-colored and sized blocks. |
| 28,29 | Create a basic schedule of your day and discuss what happens in morning, afternoon and night time. |
| 26,27 | Provide materials that will allow children to explore measuring, such as measuring cups, scales, or measuring tapes. Use non-traditional tools for measuring, such as how many shoes long is Ms. Elizabeth. |
| 20,24 | Use laundry, dishes or unloading groceries as opportunity to arrange or sort things by size. |

The guide provides support to professionals in a variety of settings such as home, early intervention, and center-based care.

In addition, all professional development events (described below) include examples of activities to meet specific standards as well as **modeling of lessons and activities** for young children. In many of the trainings provided around the Commonwealth, Early Childhood Educators are able to participate as if they are the student, learning as if a child would learn as the trainer models specific instructional strategies and activities. For early educators, particularly those in our more rural settings who may never have an opportunity to see others working directly with young children, it is critical to see what intentional play looks and sounds like. By modeling activities with training participants, trainers make replication of activities much easier – and much more likely. In fact, our observations indicate the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards are often implemented accidentally; that is, in early care and development settings, educators replicate good practices because they have seen them used, not necessarily because they are working to implement the Standards themselves.

**Comprehensive Assessment Systems**. Kentucky is unique among states in its commitment to crosswalk classroom/instructional assessments through the Early Childhood Standards. The second document developed within the Building a Strong Foundation for School Success series was the Continuous Assessment Guide (CAG), developed in 2004 and designed to complement the Early Childhood Standards. The CAG was created to assist all Early Childhood Educators in understanding the appropriate uses of assessment for screening, diagnostic, and formative assessments. It provides detailed information to Early Learning and Development programs on the appropriate use and need for continuous assessment. The Kentucky assessment system, as defined by the CAG, promotes formal and informal assessment practices based on the Early Childhood Standards. The Continuous Assessment Guide identifies four purposes for assessment:

- Assessing to promote child learning and development.
- Assessing to identify children for health and special services.
- Assessing to monitor trends and evaluate programs and services.
- Assessing developmental progress to hold individual children, teachers, and schools accountable.

In addition, public preschool programs in Kentucky are required to assess three and four-year-old Children with High Needs with a classroom/instructional assessment. This includes children with

disabilities. This is mirrored in Head Start, where the assessment instrument must be a research-based, on-going assessment tool. The CAG recommends assessments that align with the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards so Early Childhood Educators – regardless of their program funding and operation type – can utilize the data collected to understand and monitor children's growth and development. As outlined in Section B, our expanded STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system **includes additional rating points** for Early Learning and Development programs that utilize assessments based on the Kentucky Early Learning Standards.

In addition to the CAG, Kentucky also developed the Early Childhood Quality Self Study (QSS), yet another component of the Building a Strong Foundation for School Success series. The QSS gives Early Learning and Development programs a way to assess quality in center-based settings. It provides support to utilize a tool that is research based, is appropriate across settings regardless of the philosophy and approach used, and can provide direction for program improvement. The QSS can be utilized to give an Early Learning and Development program valuable information on how well and to what degree the program has integrated the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards into day-to-day operation. The self-study focuses on five key areas:

- Program Structure and Personnel
- Child Experiences within Curriculum and Assessment
- Child Experiences in the Environment
- Program Interactions with Families and Communities
- Health, Nutrition and Safety

**Workforce and Knowledge Framework.** Training and credentialing of Kentucky early care educators also aligns to our Early Childhood Standards through the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. As outlined on page 178, the Framework presents a set of expectations describing what Early Childhood Educators should know and be able to do. The Standards were the basis for the work that organized these expectations into the Framework, which was created in 2002; the Framework identifies the key components necessary for the education, training and credentialing of early care, intervention and education professionals. Endorsed by the Kentucky Early Childhood Development Authority, the Framework was revised in 2011 to include the common characteristics for coaching, consulting and mentoring.

**Professional Development.** In 2011, the Kentucky Department of Education began the Early Learning Leadership Networks (ELLNs), which provide a variety of Early Childhood Educators and teacher leaders high quality professional development based on the Kentucky Early Learning Standards. ELLNs are provided – free of charge – across the Commonwealth to build capacity around Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and support school readiness. ELLNs are facilitated by Kentucky's Regional Training Centers (RTCs); all RTC trainers are certified in the material presented.

While the RTCs are publicly funded and were developed initially to support Kentucky's school-based preschools, membership in ELLNs includes all three systems of early care – child care, Head Start, and public preschool and kindergarten teachers. This provides a rich opportunity for Early Childhood Educators and teacher leaders to network and learn about the Standards and how they can easily and intentionally be integrated into all types of early learning programs, curricula, and activities. In 2012, attendance in the networks reached an all time high with 930 Early Childhood Educators participating. But to be clear, the ELL Networks are **just one example** of how Kentucky has created dedicated plans to incorporate the Kentucky Early Learning Standards in programs across public and private sectors. Additional opportunities for Educators to receive high quality instruction on the Kentucky Early Learning Standards are provided by a variety of sources:

- Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)
- Regional Training Centers (RTCs)
- Credentialed Trainers in Early Childhood
- Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs)
- Universities (2 and 4 year programs)
- Kentucky Community and Technical College and System (KCTCS)

Another support for integration of the Standards across programs is Kentucky's long history of collaboration between Early Learning and Development programs. Kentucky programs often "blend" their resources to provide services to Children with High Needs, regardless of the setting or type of early care program. Blending is most often found between Head Start and public preschool programs, as 40 percent of all Head Start grantees in Kentucky are located in school districts and, in 2013, 38 percent of all preschool classrooms were blended. In these cases,

Children with High Needs receive **identical services** regardless of which program provides the funding.

In addition, blended environments in the Commonwealth are required to follow the **higher standard** of both programs. This means that children in a blended classroom will have an Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) certified lead teacher. Kentucky requires this specialized Bachelor degree, which is a higher requirement than those in the federal Head Start standards. The IECE program prepares students for a variety of careers working with families and their young children birth through five, including those with disabilities. IECE teachers received extensive training on how to integrate the Early Childhood Standards into daily lesson planning.

**Shared with Parents.** We also have resources for Connie Johnson, to help her quickly and easily understand what Knox should know and be able to do – **and** how to keep him curious, questioning, and learning as he grows. Along with other Early Childhood Standards materials, Kentucky has developed a set of Parent Guides (pp. 157; language example) that are available electronically and in paperback at no cost to parents. The Guides – for Birth to Three and Three and Four – provide activities based on the Standards that parents like Connie can do with their children at home. In 2012, the Parent Guides were updated to call attention to and encourage activities that can be done with a child to develop competency in the Approaches Toward Learning domain. They were also redesigned to update the look and feel and promote use. Over the past two years the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, in partnership with the Commonwealth and private partners, has printed and **distributed over 100,000 parent guides** to child care, Head Start, public preschools and Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs).

Also in the past two years, the GOEC has developed a series of monthly messages aimed at parents, which are shared through an extensive family and educator email list and through CECCs. Each monthly message is based on the Standards and focuses on practical early

childhood development activities and milestones. The messages are intended to help teachers, caregivers, families and others make sure children are kindergarten ready. Past message topics included the five domains of the School Readiness Definition and tips for families and parents. The messages are presented in an interactive newsletter to increase interest without eliminating novice Internet users. These resources are also posted to social media sites and housed on the KIDS NOW website.

As we implement the new expanded STARS rating system and its marketing campaign, we will have yet another opportunity to share the guides with families and early care providers. What does that mean? It means Miss Anita will be able to hand Connie Johnson a guide and work directly with her to support young Knox. Connie will now have the answer to her question, "How am I supposed to know what he is supposed to know?"

# communication

Birth to Three

## Communication Standards

**Demonstrates communication skills in order to express herself/himself.**

**Listening and observing skills and responds to the communication of others; and interest and engages in early literacy activities.**

**Your child's ability to express herself/himself as well as understand others. It involves speaking, listening, and is the foundation for later reading and writing.**

### What does it mean?

- Infants and toddlers learn about talking and communicating by interacting
families and the other people who take care of them. They learn from pla
(like peek-a-boo) with others and "talking" with them even before they a
- Infants and toddlers typically respond to language through making soun
babbling) and eye contact. They express themselves in many ways, by u
gestures, movement, and words.
- Infants and toddlers learn from listening and often understand much
express.
- Toddlers begin to use simple gestures and then words to express th
bye-bye and mama). Eventually, they begin to use phrases to expre
needs.

### What are some things you can do with your child?

- Talk to your child throughout the day. Talk about the things that you see everyday. Babies really like to listen to people when they use high voices and short sentences.
- Respond to your child's attempts to communicate with you. Have conversations with your toddler about their day. Expand on your toddler's words by describing objects ("Let's play with the blue car") or events ("We are going for a walk in the neighborhood").
- Be patient and listen to your child as he/she "talks" to you – whether that be through sounds, gestures, or words. Give them time to let you know how they are feeling or what they need.
- Make eye contact with your child as you are talking with them so that they know that they are special and you are interested in talking with them.
- Use single words to label and describe objects.
- Avoid baby talk. Limit using words that are stated incorrectly (ba-ba for bottle or wa-wa for water). This can be confusing for children when they are learning new words.
- Read your child's cues. Talk when he/she is ready to listen and provide quiet time and time to rest when needed.
- Read to your child. Allow babies and toddlers to interact with books in a variety of ways. Babies may like to chew on books so provide safe, soft books like bathtub books. For toddlers, provide more durable board books with lots of pictures and few words.
- Cuddle your baby or toddler while you are reading with him/her.
- Talk about the stories that you read. Point to the pictures and describe them. For toddlers, ask them questions about the pictures or story.
- Sings songs with your child. Most children love music with interesting words and repetition, like "Wheels -on-the-Bus."
- Repeat and expand on the words your child uses. Toddlers often use one word to represent an idea ("Ball" for "I want the ball"). You can add to their words by stating a sentence such as "Yes, you want the blue ball."
- Use gestures (waving hand for bye-bye) accompanied by words when communicating with your child.
- When your child is able, provide him/her the opportunity to scribble. Use large crayons and plain paper. Talk about him/her work and display it in your home.

**Approaches to Learning: Persistence and Attentiveness**

When you respond to your infant's eye contact, cry or babbling, you are gaining the trust and attentiveness of your infant. When you have a "conversation" with your toddler, you are letting him/her know that they are important. The longer these "conversations" are, the more attentive your child becomes.

**(C)(1)(d) Supports in place to promote understanding of Standards across programs…**

As we expand the STARS rating system through Kentucky All★STARs, we will work with each early care setting and provider to create individual Professional Development Plans to guide them from one STAR level to the next, higher level. Miss Anita, for example, may begin at 2 Stars. To move to 3 Stars, we anticipate – in the yet-to-be-expanded system – she will work with a PD Counselor (p. 178) to determine which trainings will help her address deficits in her own skills and competencies. Regardless of the type of trainings she chooses, she will be immersed in the content and activities of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards; however, she may also choose to receive specific trainings on how to develop intentional standards-aligned lessons that will demonstrate her use of the standards. That would help her meet the one missing indicator to move her to 3 Star.

In addition, as we outlined above, professional development providers statewide embed the standards in their sessions, model specific standards-based activities, and make replication of activities easy. We fully acknowledge that, while it would be great if all early childhood educators intentionally used the standards all the time, we deliberately give educators enough knowledge, tools and tactics so using the standards becomes second nature, even if it's by accident. They simply replicate a great activity because they have seen it before – not because they are working to implement the standards themselves.

While the past ten years have seen a great deal of success at promoting the use and integration of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards in Early Learning and Development programs, we recognize that we must never stop looking for opportunities to improve the Standards and how they may be better integrated into Early Learning and Development environments. Kentucky has certainly demonstrated through a series of revisions and updates that the Standards will be regularly reviewed and revised

Further, to reach more Early Learning and Developing programs, we will work with the Assessment Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council to develop and implement a series of online modules that provide high-quality training to Early Childhood Educators. The modules would focus on one of the developmental domains of School Readiness and give Educators strategies on how they can utilize the Standards in their daily planning. These modules will be made available on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood's website and will provide programs a no cost way to receive training on the Early Childhood Standards.

And finally, we note that two of our program types – public preschools and Head Start programs – are currently required to utilize the Early Childhood Standards. As we expand the STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system, we anticipate all early care programs will demonstrate the ongoing and consistent use of the Kentucky standards to become a high-quality early care providers (likely 3 or 4 Stars on a 5 Star scale, as determined in 2014).

| C1 Promoting Use of Early Learning Standards Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Anticipated Award Date | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identify two domains of school readiness to develop training modules around | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Assessment Workgroup<br>Ky Department of Education |
| Identify effective trainer(s) in chosen domains | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Assessment Workgroup<br>Ky Department of Education |
| Curriculum module development | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Assessment Workgroup<br>Ky Department of Education |
| Develop training materials | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Assessment Workgroup<br>Ky Department of Education |
| Disseminate training modules to educators | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | | X | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Assessment Workgroup<br>Ky Department of Education |

# Section C4
## Standards, Family Engagement

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families

Connie Johnson's sister, Nina, lives in Nashville – the big city. She's too far away for regular babysitting but provides the occasional sleepover. Maya is especially crazy about Aunt NeNe, asking at every turn when she and Knox will have another chance to head south. But the trip is nearly three hours and a time-zone change from Connie's apartment in rural Taylor County, just outside tiny Campbellsville, Kentucky (population, 8,618). Every six weeks or so, she meets Nina in Bowling Green, a pretty good mid-point, and hands over Maya and Knox. Visits are more for fun than necessity, as the distance prohibits regular drop-offs.

Connie adores her big sister; but she is not a daily lifeline. Time and time again, Connie has come to turn to the people she sees most – Miss Anita and Connie's co-workers at Taylor Regional Hospital. It's not the best situation; while she doesn't mind asking for an occasional babysitter, she really doesn't want to share her business with the gang at work. As her sister reminds her, you never want your co-workers knowing too much about your personal problems. And there have been a few. The past few years have certainly been a challenge. But she is making it. Unfortunately, she knows "just making it" is not enough, not for Maya and Knox. To help them develop a strong foundation as they begin school, she needs all the help she can get.

### (C)(4)(a) Establishing a progression of standards … that enhance the capacity of families

Kentucky has a long history of supporting and engaging families in their children's education. Indeed, as research, suggests that parents and family members are more likely to become engaged in their young child's development and learning when they have positive and trusting relationships with those who support them (Bryk, 2003). We are proposing a plan that will dramatically increase the system of supports that families like Connie, Maya and Knox receive in times of stress. In short, wherever they go to receive services, they will be enveloped with a system designed to strengthen their family's protective factors and help to mitigate the toxic stress they encounter in their everyday lives.

We will accomplish this task by implementing the Strengthening Families Framework across the Commonwealth. Strengthening Families not only will be embedded in the newly designed, mandatory TQRIS; it will be rolled out to many state agencies that have frequent contact with High Need families. Supporting groups include all Early Childhood Educators, Behavioral Health, Mental Health, Family Resource Centers, Maternal and Child Health, Division for

Community Based Services and Public Health. All agencies will receive training on the Strengthening Families Framework to create a statewide system.

For the past 40 years, state agencies have tried to decrease at-risk families' exposure to negative factors. Awareness campaigns and programs designed to keep these families from the effects of child abuse, substance abuse, and other negative factors have been met with only moderate success. Strengthening Families represents a unique route: rather than attempting to give families information on avoiding risky behaviors, Strengthening Families helps families build up their own, internal support mechanisms. By focusing on five protective factors, Strengthening Families seeks to build resiliency in families as they encounter toxic stress and provides a system of support so that all family members have the tools to cope with the negative effects.

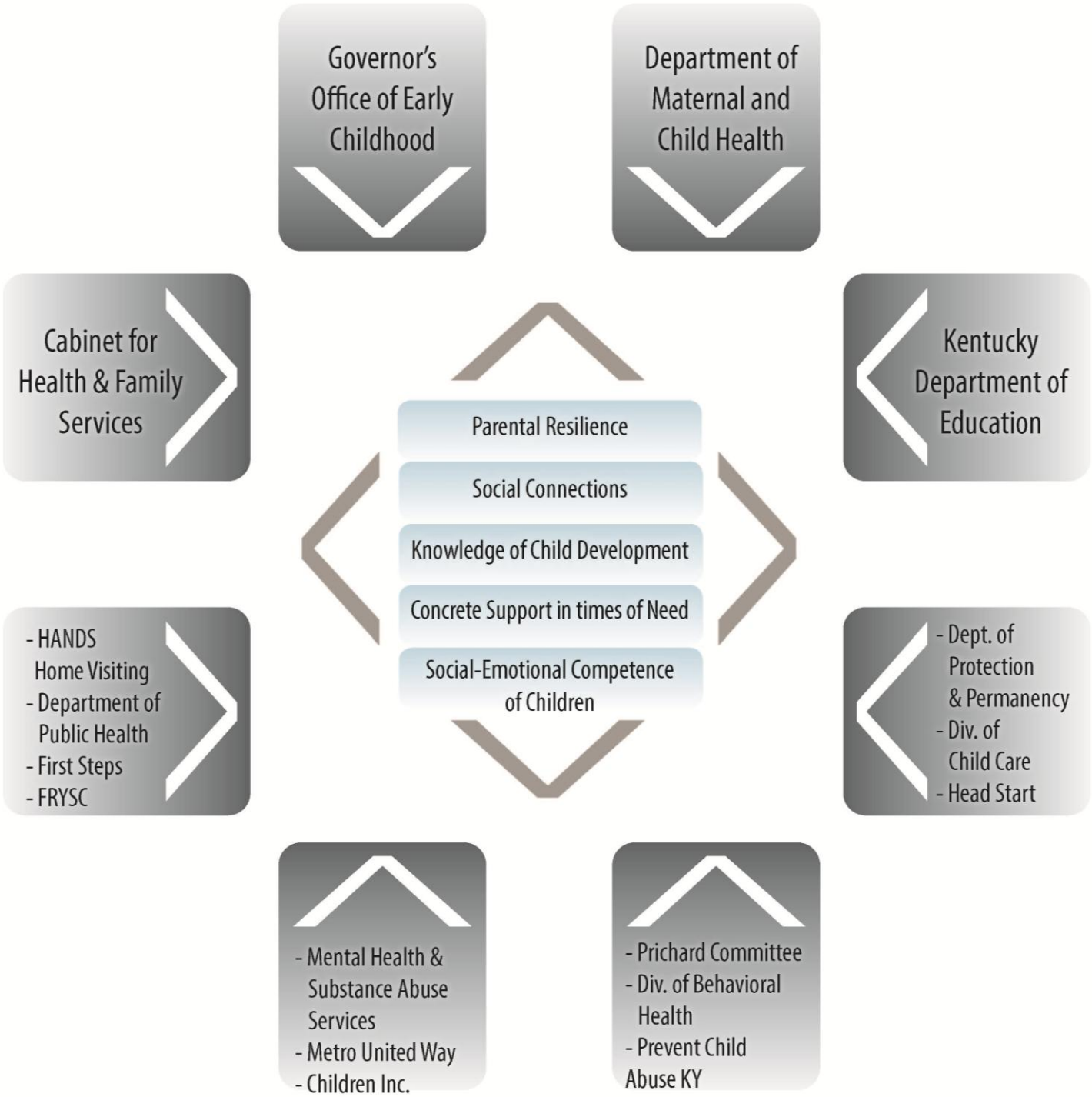
The Strengthening Families Framework (SFF) is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for families of all types – at-risk and not-so-at-risk. The evidence-based training program is found to significantly reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, addictive behaviors, and to improve social competencies and school performance. Child maltreatment also decreases as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills. Kentucky will adopt the five protective factors of the Strengthening Families Framework, as briefly outlined here:

- **Parental Resilience**. While stress is unavoidable, a parent's resilience – or his/her ability to bounce back from everyday stress – directly affects the overall impact of stress in the family. Helping a parent or caregiver build his/her ability to manage the challenges of life can prevent the toxic stress that can impair learning, behavior, and physical and mental well-being (Shonkoff, 2011). No one can eliminate stress from parenting, but a parent's capacity for resiliency and finding ways to solve problems builds trusting relationships, helping children seek help and support as needed
- **Social Connections**. Everyone needs friends, family and a support structure, a community that provides emotional support and helps solve the daily problems that come our way. Creating support networks between families offers both the support and the opportunity to give back, which builds self-esteem in all family members. Concrete assistance – quite different from offers of help – is the means by which families learn to accept support from others and offer support to others.

- **Concrete Support in Times of Need**. Almost every family at one time or another needs help with the basics in life: food, shelter, clothing and health care. These are essential for families and are typically available in our communities. However, linking families to those services, particularly during times of crisis, such as domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse, can be difficult. Service agencies can learn to reach and support these families through the Framework.
- **Knowledge of Childhood Development.** We are not born knowing how to parent; we need to learn and understand child development and the appropriate expectations to have for each individual child, regardless of his/her age. This helps families see their children in a positive light and promotes healthy development. Timely information provided to parents and caregivers – information and support that comes when parents need it most – has the greatest effect and can help change negative parenting behaviors.
- **Social-Emotional Competence of Children**. Children need to develop the ability to interact positively with others, learn to self-regulate their behavior and communicate their feelings. The earlier a family can identify challenging behaviors or delays in creating these skills, the more likely negative results can be prevented. By doing so, a child's development can stay on track.

Strengthening Families fully meets all U.S. federal agencies' standards for science-based prevention programs and is used in 17 countries. It is culturally sensitive rather than culturally specific, but has also been successfully adapted for African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and American Indian families, and has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, Swedish, French, Thai, and Chinese. A cultural adaptation protocol also has been developed and published (Kumpfer, 2008). A graphic demonstrating our partner support for Strengthening Families follows.

# STRENGTHENING FAMILIES: **CROSS SECTOR EFFORTS**



In addition to adopting Strengthening Families, we plan a statewide expansion of Toyota's bornlearning® Academies for families with Children with High Needs. Toyota's bornlearning® is a Kentucky product, the result of a partnership between Toyota and The United Way of Northern Kentucky. It was piloted in a single Kentucky school district before spreading to neighboring districts.

The Toyota bornlearning® Academies will be implemented through the existing structure of Family Resource & Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs), which are located in every high need elementary school in Kentucky. FRYSCs will apply to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Division of Family Resource Youth Service Centers to be part of the initiative and, beginning in 2014, will receive training on the implementation of the workshops and sessions. The Toyota bornlearning® Academies will be open to all families in the community and will help link early learning with the K-12 learning environment.

The Toyota bornlearning® Academies are a parenting and school readiness initiative for families of children age birth through four, that links parents and Children with High Needs directly to schools through their local FRYSC. The Toyota bornlearning® Academies provides an opportunity for families to learn together. They are based, in most cases, in the elementary school that the child will attend when they go to Kindergarten. The initiative provides school-based workshops that inform busy, overwhelmed parents and caregivers how to turn everyday moments into learning opportunities. Like Strengthening Families, the Toyota bornlearning® Academies' approach provides sustainability for each community. FRYSCs will be able to continue the program and share training efforts in other communities for a minimal expense.

In addition, we will embed family engagement strategies – including Strengthening Families – in the expansion of our STARS quality rating system. As detailed in Section B of this proposal, Kentucky has maintained a tiered quality rating and improvement system for 13 years. The voluntary system is called STARS for KIDS NOW (STARS) and is available to licensed child care centers and certified family child care homes. Participants in the program are required to have, at a minimum, one Family Engagement activity per year. As they progress toward higher levels of quality in the existing system, the number of family engagement activities required increases. At the highest level (STARS level 4), participants are required to have a minimum of four family engagement activities per year.

In our STARS expansion, we will dramatically increase the support families receive through our rating system. As an integral part of Kentucky's overall system of support, the TQRIS represents an important connection to families with Children with High Needs. The Strengthening Families Framework will be integrated into the newly expanded design of the STARS rating system; all Early Childhood Educators, including professionals in child care, Head Start and publicly-funded preschool **will receive high quality training on Strengthening Families** through Kentucky's responsive professional development system. As detailed in Section D, we will redesign the professional development system to provide training on high priority, targeted topics. One of those topics will be the protective factors built through Strengthening Families. Early Learning and Development programs in the newly designed – and soon to be mandatory – rating system will be provided training on the five protective factors and the effects of toxic stress. They then will utilize this information to create family engagement activities which are required at the lower levels of the system. Participants in the highest tiers of the newly redesigned TQRIS will receive points toward a higher rating level in the expanded system should they offer additional family engagement activities.

**(C)(4)(b) Increasing the number, percentage of EC Educators trained and supported**

Professional development of Early Childhood Educators is a critical component of Kentucky's High Quality Plan to adopt the Strengthening Families (SF) Framework statewide. For nearly a year now, Kentucky has convened a team of public and private stakeholder to envision what a statewide implementation of Strengthening Families would look like. Called the Strengthening Families Leadership Team, it includes members from many of the state agencies that have daily interaction with High Need families. In the first year of the project, the SF Leadership Team will hire a Strengthening Families Coordinator to oversee implementation of the Framework. This coordinator will work out of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and will be advised by the SF Leadership Team.

Also in the first year, the SF Coordinator, working with the SF Leadership Team, will identify a core group of individuals that will receive Strengthening Families training focused on cross agency implementation from the Center for the Study of Social Policy (or other agency) to become subject matter experts in the Strengthening Families Framework. The SF Coordinator, along with the subject matter experts, will design and develop plans to deploy and train the

necessary individuals in their respective agencies. With the plan in hand, training will commence, likely in Year 2 of Kentucky All★STARS and continue through and beyond Year 4.

As part of the Professional Development Registry outlined in D1, we will also begin collecting data related to the individuals who receive and utilize the training most fully. From the beginning of our Kentucky All★STARS work on the registry – also called the Early Care and Education Training Records Information System or ECE-TRIS – we will be able to observe more effectively the impact of the SF Framework on Early Childhood Educators.

**(C)(4)(c) Promoting family support, engagement statewide… leveraging existing resources**

As detailed in Section A, Kentucky has a robust system of supports available to families through our partner groups. Our High Quality plan will unify this system to support families by building family resiliency through the Strengthening Families Framework. Ensuring the statewide reach of Strengthening Families, we will continue to work with other partner agencies and programs, who will work to adopt the Strengthening Families Framework. These include but are not limited to the following:

- **Community Early Childhood Councils**. Kentucky's community based network of Early Childhood experts, advocates and other community members, which provide training and materials to parents on the importance of early learning and development.
- **Head Starts.** Head Start programs are required by federal standards to engage families in their children's learning. They do this in a variety of ways including home visiting, special family days where families join in their children's learning and parent teacher conferences.
- **HANDS**. Kentucky's home visitation program that works with new and expectant parents to support healthy pregnancies and births, in understanding early child development, and to provide resources. HANDS is also the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program in the Commonwealth.
- **First Steps**. First Steps is a statewide early intervention system that provides services to children with developmental disabilities, or a particular medical condition that is known to cause a developmental delay, from birth to age 3 and their families. First Steps offers comprehensive services through a network of early intervention providers and service disciplines and is administered by the Department for Public Health in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

- **STARS for KIDS NOW**. The re-envisioned, redesigned STARS for KIDS NOW tiered quality rating and improvement system will require participants to have family engagement activities at all levels. Training will be provided on Strengthening Families at the lower levels of the system and points will be awarded to participants at the top tiers.
- **FRYCS**. Family Resource Youth Service Centers are school based support centers that focus on removing barriers for academic success.

Another innovative approach is the statewide expansion of the Toyota bornlearning® Academies. Described above, the Toyota bornlearning® Academies are a series of comfortable workshops aimed at giving families the opportunity to learn together; families receive information necessary to make every moment in their child's life a teachable moment.

Looking to create a sustainable network statewide, Toyota's bornlearning® Academies began looking for state partners. Several state agencies were invited to participate in the 2012-2013 school year expansion across the state, including the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and state administrators for the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs). It became clear that local FRYSCs are the optimal place to house Toyota's bornlearning® Academies, as FRYSCs connect daily with the community, children, and families with High Needs; aligning the efforts to reach families of our young children was a natural fit. Our High Quality plan will include the dramatic expansion of the number of Toyota bornlearning® Academies to 150 across the Commonwealth; data analyzed for the pilot year proved the need for Toyota's bornlearning® Academy expansion statewide. According to the Nielsen State Expansion Toyota's bornlearning® Academy analysis, families who participated were overwhelmingly positive with feedback; in addition, there was an increase of parent leadership knowledge on brief pre and posts quizzes.

Our goal for Toyota's bornlearning® Academies is to reach every school district throughout the Commonwealth will truly move the administration of the initiative statewide. In project Year 1, we will hire a Toyota's bornlearning® Academy (TBLA) Coordinator to be located in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Division of Family Resource Youth Services Centers. Currently administered through the United Way of Kentucky, Toyota's bornlearning® Academy has a well established parent leadership curriculum and local implementation training program that will we utilize in project Year 1. Our TBLA Coordinator will work closely with the United Way of Kentucky for in-depth training to ensure continuity throughout the program expansion.

The Toyota's bornlearning® Academy Coordinator will plan and execute the recruitment of new schools and the retention of old schools, as well as serve as the technical assistance and training coordinator for all participating elementary schools. In the first two years, we expect to recruit 25 additional schools to the program and an additional 50 schools subsequently, for a total of 150 additional Toyota's bornlearning® Academies by 2017. All administrative functions, currently completed by the United Way of Kentucky, will be part of the duties of the Toyota's bornlearning® Academy Coordinator by the conclusion of Year 2. As this project comes to a close, the responsibilities of the Toyota's bornlearning® Academy Coordinator will be rolled into the administrative functions housed at CHFS FRYSC.

| Strengthening Families Milestones | Year 1 Qtr 1 | Year 1 Qtr 2 | Year 1 Qtr 3 | Year 1 Qtr 4 | Year 2 Qtr 1 | Year 2 Qtr 2 | Year 2 Qtr 3 | Year 2 Qtr 4 | Year 3 Qtr 1 | Year 3 Qtr 2 | Year 3 Qtr 3 | Year 3 Qtr 4 | Year 4 Qtr 1 | Year 4 Qtr 2 | Year 4 Qtr 3 | Year 4 Qtr4 | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anticipated Award Date | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop the job description for the Strengthening Families Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Leadership Team participate in SF Trainings | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Post the job description for Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Hire Strengthening Families Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| State Leadership meetings | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Plan cross-program implementation | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Begin Train the Trainers program | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Plan implementation plan including measurement system | | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Build local awareness | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |

| Strengthening Families Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Local agency and organization training | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Mapping State Systems | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Protective Factor embed in QRIS | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | Cabinet for Health and Family Services |
| Partners embed Strengthening Families logic into request for proposals for CECCs and FRYSC | | | | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Create the Parent Advisory Council | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Embed into Regional Interagency Committees | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Parent Café Trainings | | | | | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | Project Manager; GOEC |

| Strengthening Families Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Begin Parent Café's statewide | | | | | | | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Collect and publicize success stories | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | Project Manager; GOEC |
| Evaluate delivery system and sustainability | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Outcome measurement | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |
| Overall program evaluation and determine best practices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | Project Manager; GOEC<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Strengthening Families Leadership Team |

| Toyota bornlearning® Academies Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Anticipated Award Date | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop the job description for the TBLA Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>FRYSC<br>United Way<br>Toyota |
| Post the job description for TBLA Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>FRYSC |
| Hire TBLA Coordinator | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | FRYSC |
| Train Coordinator in implementation of TBLA Academies | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | United Way<br>TBLA Coordinator (FRYSC/CHFS) |
| Develop plan for recruitment and retention | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | TBLA Coordinator (FRYSC/CHFS)<br>United Way |
| Develop plan for TBLA schools; monthly and annually | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | United Way<br>TBLA Coordinator |
| Identify new schools to implement TBLA Academies | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | TBLA Coordinator(CHFS) |
| Detailed training for new and veteran TBLA Schools | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | United Way<br>TBLA Coordinator (CHFS) |

| Toyota bornlearning® Academies Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Monthly conference calls with new and veteran TBLA Schools | | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | United Way<br>TBLA Coordinator (CHFS) |
| Support and Technical Assistance to existing TBLA Academies | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | | TBLA Coordinator |
| Data is analyzed for each TBLA | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | United Way of Kentucky<br>TBLA Coordinator (CHFS) |
| TBLA Graduation | | | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | TBLA Coordinator (CHFS) |
| Plans new school announcements/kick-off | | | | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | TBLA Coordinator (CHFS)<br>United Way<br>Toyota |
| TBLA integration into FRYSC support structures | | | | | | | | | | | → | → | → | → | | | TBLA Coordinator (CHFS) |

# Section D1
# A Great Early Childhood Workforce

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## (D)(1) Developing a workforce knowledge and competency framework

All Miss Anita every wanted was to take care of kids – big kids, little kids, babies. It's all the same to her. She started babysitting in middle school and was soon working more for families in Taylor County than she was on her homework. She graduated on time, but she was no rock star. She had all the education she needed to work with little ones. She just loved the little ones. But now, with the training she's required to receive each year, she wonders: Maybe I should do something about that? Everybody seems to know just a little more than I do, she thinks…

That pretty well describes Linda Avery, an early care provider in Hopkinsville, KY. Linda never graduated from high school. Years later, as a caregiver for children, she came to a startling conclusion: How could she give the children in her care what they deserved if she never completed high school? Soon after, she enrolled in a Community Ed. GED class. A KIDS NOW scholarship and much hard work later, she had her CDA, a Director Credential, an Associate Degree, and she is working on a Bachelor degree. **She also operates a 4 Star early care and development center**. Linda is providing high-quality care for young children every day.

### (D)(1)(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has developed a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, along with a statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Framework, to promote child learning and development and improve child outcomes. As part of this Framework, the Commonwealth has engaged postsecondary institutions, training centers, resource and referral organizations, and others to make available professional development opportunities to meet the requirements of the Professional Development (PD) Framework. In so doing, the State has unequivocally met the criteria for this section, as will be seen below.

The STARS quality rating system evaluation has been reinforced through data that shows early childhood educator professional development matters. The quality of early education and the training and knowledge of providers directly affects child learning and development outcomes.

In 2000 a new initiative was created called Kentucky Invests in Developing Success (KIDS) NOW. In addition to creating the first TQRIS to support and improve Kentucky's early learning and development efforts, KIDS Now established the Early Childhood Development Authority

and with it the capacity to focus resources for both the short and long term. This included the capacity to coordinate stakeholders to target specific areas of concern.

Chief among the various areas undertaken is the expansion of the early learning and development workforce. Regional and statewide groups have built and continue to expand a continuum of learning that addresses the needs of future employees and employers. As part of the KIDS NOW initiative, Kentucky developed a workforce knowledge and competency framework and progression of credentials that includes articulation/transfer of credits, availability of scholarships and effective training in 2001. This evidence-based Early Childhood Professional Development Framework (PD Framework) was created by five professional development workgroups, submitted to the Professional Development Council, and approved by the Early Childhood Development Authority. These five workgroups were made up of experts from Kentucky's postsecondary institutions, early learning and development experts, and early childhood educators. Since 2002, the PD Framework and extensive early childhood credentialing system have been effectively implemented throughout the Commonwealth.

The PD Framework was designed to develop an early childhood education workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve young children's health, improve social and emotional cognitive outcomes, enhance school readiness, and help close the school readiness gap that exists between children with high needs and their peers at kindergarten entry.

The PD Framework was designed to develop an early childhood education (ECE) workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve young children's health, improve social and emotional cognitive outcomes, enhance school readiness, and help close the school readiness gap that exists between Children with High Needs and their peers at kindergarten entry. In addition, the PD Framework provides specific recommendations on how education, training and credentials are structured to support high-quality practices across the early care, intervention, and education systems.

Kentucky will continue to ensure the effective use and implementation of all components within the PD Framework, such as establishing the levels of training and recommended progressions through the Kentucky Early Childhood Core Content. The Kentucky PD

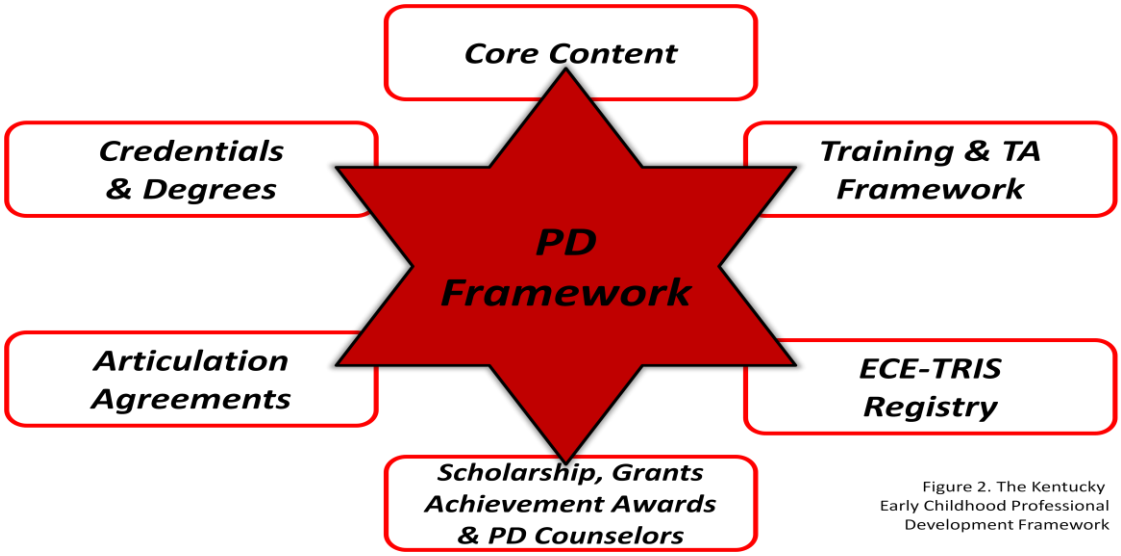



Figure 2. The Kentucky Early Childhood Professional Development Framework

Framework defines five levels of professional accomplishment as well as the necessary training, technical assistance, credentialing, and articulation requirements to support each level.

Kentucky licensing requires all early childhood education professionals to have a PD plan; 15 hours of PD per year is required through licensing for child care and Head Start and 18 hours are required for preschool and school-based Head Start.

The PD Framework includes:

- Early childhood core content which includes the early childhood standards and describes what early childhood professionals should know and be able to do;
- Credentials and degrees for early care, intervention and education professionals;
- A seamless training track to support professionals in building k
  from level to level;
- Provision of support services and/or technical assistance to help implement and sustain skills and practices of staff in the work environment;
- Articulation agreements which support the transfer of credits across education and training entities;
- A scholarship program at both college and non-college levels for early childhood professionals; and
- A Professional Development Training Registry called the Early Childhood Education Training Registry and Information System, or ECE-TRIS, which tracks continuing education, educational attainment, and partial credential information.

In addition, Kentucky will ensure the PD Framework is aligned with the new, integrated TQRIS system (expanded STARS), and will increase expectations around PD, particularly as a means to increase quality ratings in the expanded TQRIS system. The Early Childhood Advisory Council's STARS Workgroup includes staff and stakeholders who routinely work with and/or support the PD Framework and its implementation across the state. The PD Framework's Core Competencies specifically include the following subject areas:

- **Child growth and development**: Incorporating knowledge and application of early learning and development standards including child development and effective behavior management strategies, learning experiences for every child regardless of age must be planned around the child's developmental abilities. Early childhood educators must recognize that development proceeds in predictable steps and learning occurs in recognized sequences, but must also take into consideration individual, age-level, and cultural/ethnic characteristics when assessing children's rates and styles of development.
- **Health, safety and nutrition:** Incorporating knowledge of child health (the basic needs of all humans), early childhood environments must ensure they meet these basic needs. Programs must adhere to relevant laws and regulations, and must consider the health, growth and developmental requirements for each child within the context of cultural and developmental diversity and any special needs.
- **Professional development:** Providers of early care, intervention and education must take advantage of opportunities to grow professionally, follow ethical standards of behavior, and demonstrate knowledge of, and involvement in, advocacy for early childhood learning environments.
- **Learning environments and curriculum**: Incorporating knowledge of early math and literacy development as well as effective instructional practices to support their development, providers of early care, intervention and education must know how to offer an organized, inviting, accessible and interactive environment with many diverse and appropriate materials, activities and experiences.
- **Child assessment**: Incorporating effective use of data and comprehensive assessment systems to guide instruction and program improvement. Ongoing assessment helps early childhood educators evaluate all areas of a child's growth and development. Educators must be able to observe, assess, interpret, and document children's skills and behavior,

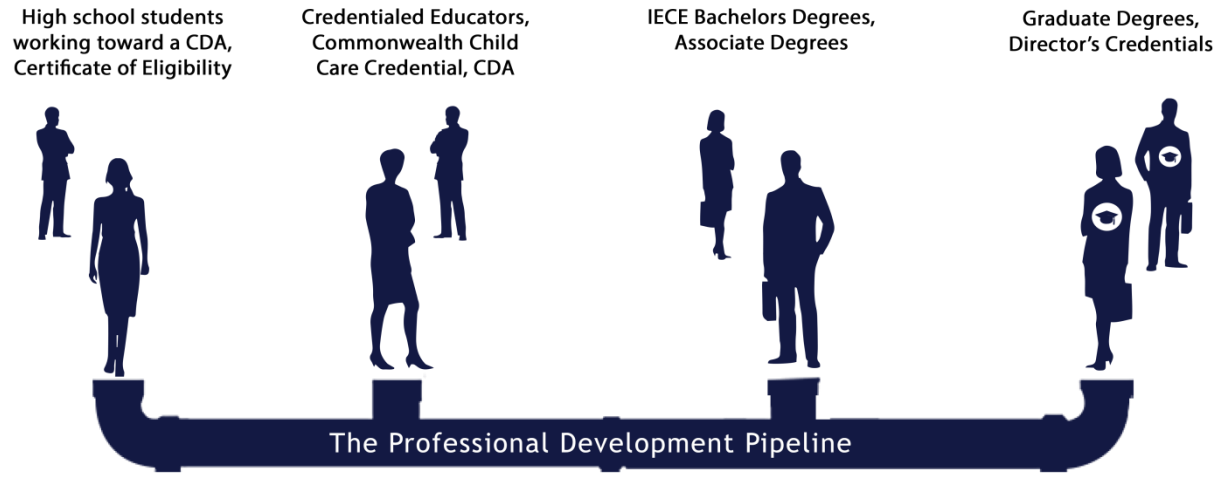
systematically report on them to appropriate staff and family members, and use the gathered information to plan developmentally appropriate experiences and activities.

- **Family and community partnerships**: Incorporating knowledge of protective factors and effective approaches to partnering with families and building families' knowledge, skills and capacity to promote children's health and development in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, early childhood interventionists and educators must be able to understand family roles and how they play out in the lives of children. They must also integrate the following concepts:
  - Children develop within the context of their families, and families are the primary influence on children's development and have primary responsibility for child-rearing. In turn, each child has influence on the members of his/her family and on the family as a system.
  - A responsive early education environment respects and celebrates the diversity of values, customs and traditions in the family of each child and nurtures the primary relationships between children and those who parent them. A responsive early education environment also offers a variety of meaningful opportunities for families to participate in early childhood programs.
  - Provide community resource connections, as appropriate, through curriculum, interpersonal relationships and knowledgeable referrals.
- **Program management and evaluation**: Early childhood interventionists, educators and caregivers must use all available resources for a quality program. They must also be effective communicators, planners, record-keepers and evaluators. Program evaluation will include input from staff, families and the community.

**(D)(1)(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees**

One area of focus for Kentucky's KIDS NOW initiative has been to consistently improve the quality of early learning environments by improving the qualifications of the early childhood workforce. According to the 2012 Early Care and Education Evaluation conducted by the University of Kentucky, "Teacher education level has consistently been associated with positive child outcomes in Kentucky's evaluation of early care and education. Evaluation results suggest that teachers with more experience engage in teaching behaviors (which are) linked to positive child outcomes."

In 2001, with the creation of the PD Framework requirements and stipulations regarding ECE professionals' degrees, credentialing and training were instituted. A number of resources were utilized to create the PD Framework and continues to be used to inform the current work (see List of Resources, Appendix). Since 2011, Kentucky has made a concerted effort to increase collaboration across the three silos (Early Learning and Development Programs, Head Start and Public Preschool) to work closely and collaboratively together for greater educational gains




across the board. This collaboration has ensured better use of finances by removing duplicative services/funding, and ensures positive outcomes for the Commonwealth's youngest residents.

Kentucky has utilized the concept of a Career Lattice, as seen in the graphic above, for over 15 years. As part of KIDS NOW, the PD Career Lattice was intentionally redesigned to allow multiple points of entry into the Early Childhood Education career field. Because the ECE workforce is transient and fluid, and come from many different entry points into the ECE field, the PD Career Lattice is the perfect model for ECE professional development growth.

In addition, the college- and career-ready emphasis the State has instituted has helped create an opportunity to significantly expand the workforce by developing future early childhood educators within high school Family and Consumer Sciences Early Childhood programs. High school students who successfully complete the course requirements receive a Certificate of Eligibility to apply for the Commonwealth Child Care Credential. In 2011, the Council for Professional Recognition began allowing eligibility for the Child Development Associate (CDA) designation to high school juniors and seniors in early childhood education vocational programs. These students must meet all requirements to obtain the designation, but do not have to be

years old or a high school graduate prior to obtaining it. This program creates a **fast-track to careers and credentials** for high school students and increases the number of available and highly-qualified early childhood workers. Additionally, the program creates increased buy-in from stakeholders for the following reasons:

- Increased STARS participation. Currently, Centers with a 3 STAR rating or higher are required to have 50 percent of employees with Child Development Associate or Commonwealth Child Care Credentials designations.
- The Child Development Associate or Commonwealth Child Care Credentials (described below) enable high schools to meet the required stipulation that students graduate career ready – a major push of the Kentucky legislature for public education.
- Early Care and Education Programs are able to hire new and knowledgeable staff to replace Associate, Bachelor and Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education staff who are moving up in their careers.

Kentucky's PD Framework provides multiple opportunities for those in the early childhood workforce to acquire increasing levels of professional credentials. Each credential represents a distinct entry/exit point, and a building block to the next level of credentialing and competency.

The State has articulated the national Child Development Associate (CDA) credential to 9-12 college credit hours which gives Early Childhood Educators the incentive to continue their personal professional development. The CDA is a requirement for Head Start, and listed as a benchmark for preschool aides by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). The portability of the CDA credential from state to state and its recognition in programs such as Head Start, corporate child care, military child care and several other countries makes it a valuable credential to obtain. For Kentucky, the CDA is an opportunity to package non-college credit bearing hours of PD into a credential recognized by higher education for ECE professionals. This enables ECE professionals climbing the career lattice to transition easily into higher education and leverages state scholarship dollars for the substantially less expensive non-college CDA training.

In addition to the national CDA credential, Kentucky also offers four specific early childhood credentials/certificates, including the following:

- **Commonwealth Child Care Credential (CCCC):** This credential reflects additional training for practitioners wanting to exceed the minimum training hours required by child care licensing regulations. The CCCC provides the non-traditional ECE worker a first step into the CDA credential, effectively creating a halfway point to the CDA. The CCCC provides a merit/milestone award for the successful completion of the required hours, and incentivizes this PD step. The CCCC requires 60 hours of instruction based on a common set of core competencies within the PD Framework and is awarded by the Division of Child Care. The CCCC aligns with the first 60 hours of the Child Development Associate credential and can articulate to a 3-credit hour college course.
- **Director's Credential:** This credential provides education and development in the needed skill areas to manage an early childhood program. Requirements may include 12 college credit hours in early childhood education and related administrative subjects. The credential is awarded by the Division of Child Care upon successful completion of the requirements and upon recommendation by an approved higher education institution.

- **Trainer's Credential:** This credential signifies the successful completion of competencies and standards for those providing training to early childhood practitioners from basic level one to a level five credential. Specific education and experience are required as well as completion of "Fundamentals of Effective Training" (15 hours) and "The Introduction to Resources in Kentucky for Early Care and Education Trainers" (2 hours). The trainer's level of education, training and experience corresponds directly to the content levels at which training may be offered.
- **Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education Certificate:** This college or university certificate is achieved through the teacher licensure program, allowing early care and education professionals to teach children from birth through self-contained kindergarten (regular and special education) in public school and early intervention settings. It provides educators with knowledge about cognitive, physical, social and emotional development. Programming for the Certificate is being offered through Kentucky colleges and universities and is available at the Bachelor and graduate degree levels with oversight provided by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board.

The Professional Development (PD) Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council has a number of subgroups, including:

- Trainer's Competencies Workgroup
- Technical Assistance/Coaching Workgroup
- Core Content Workgroup
- The Institutions of Higher Education

With and through these groups, the PD Workgroup is currently evaluating all aspects of the original PD Framework strategies (including trainer competencies and core content for early childhood educators); they are actively pursuing those strategies which better align and streamline professional development systems for early care, preschool and Head Start. The PD Workgroup is looking assist early childhood educators to understand how prior education and/or training at one level will transfer to another level or educational institution. The PD Framework strategies will also be aligned with the expanded STARS quality rating and improvement system.

The Trainer Competency (TC) Workgroup and the Technical Assistance/Coaching Subgroup (both part of the PD Workgroup) have been working to identify "next steps" which will help build additional supports, build on Kentucky's Trainer Credential, and continue to enhance

trainer competencies to ensure the delivery of high quality training. The ultimate goal of identifying needed next steps is to increase the application of best practices in early childhood training within the workplace. The Workgroup has successfully identified four priorities going forward:

- Creation of a mentoring system in Kentucky for new trainers;
- Creation of a self-assessment tool for trainers;
- Creation of observation checklists for trainer competencies; and
- Develop Professional Learning Communities for trainers.

The TC Workgroup has drafted a self-assessment tool for trainers which aligns with the PD Framework, the Fundamentals of Effective Training Principles (for self-improvement), and have included suggestions for how the tool may best be utilized. In addition, the TA/Coaching Subgroup has been working to increase knowledge and expertise of all ECE professionals through mentoring, coaching and consultation. The Workgroup is a cross section of the early childhood community including Head Start, Regional Training Centers, QEI/STARS, HANDS, First Steps, Child Care Aware TA Coordinators, and Child Care Nurse Consultants. All TA providers will have a **common set of competencies** that provide the foundation for effective high quality TA. The subgroup is tasked with developing a proposal or plan for an optional TA credential which designates that TA providers demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to provide effective TA. They are now in the process of making recommendations to the PD Workgroup.

Professional development for early care and learning professionals in Kentucky is being delivered through a variety of partners (e.g., institutions of higher education, regional training centers, child care resource and referral agencies, CECCs, Kentucky Educational Television and others) in coordination with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood.

**(D)(1)(c) Engage postsecondary institutions, others in aligning PD opportunities**

Kentucky's PD Framework includes an articulation process integrating the system for credentialing and training of early childhood professionals – a process that allows professionals at any point in the continuum to work toward higher levels of professionalism. The PD Framework includes five levels of competency, each of which connects and transfers to the next level. At lower levels of competency, the completion of a particular credential, program or certificate transfers as college credit. Students are then able to transfer their training hours

between secondary schools, community and technical colleges, training programs, and four-year institutions. The academic credits are transferable as well, supporting those who may decide to work toward an Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) degree.

Kentucky's higher education system is organized around regional universities, both public and private, and local community colleges in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). Currently there are **36 approved programs** aligned with Kentucky's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, which includes all state universities and most community colleges and public and private colleges. Individual institutions will ensure students hold the requisite levels of competency for each early childhood education credential or certificate earned.

For most colleges in the KCTCS, the Child Development Associate credential translates into nine hours of college credit, and the Commonwealth Child Care Credential and Child Development Associate have both been articulated by course of study. Community Colleges award an Associates of Applied Science in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education to their graduating students, and both two- and four-year programs for Early Childhood Educators in Kentucky have been aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. The State has worked to ensure articulation agreements which allow students to more easily obtain skills and credits necessary to become college-degreed early childhood educators. The Director's Credential at all schools is approved through college coursework content evaluated by a representative group of knowledgeable professionals within the field.

Kentucky's Early Care and Education credentialed trainers promote high quality professional development which results in the transfer of learning and positive outcomes for young children and their families. Training provided by credentialed trainers meets the requirements of the following programs: child care licensing, certification and registered provider training; the current STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System; Commonwealth Child Care Credential renewal; and Trainer's Credential renewal. Early Care and Education coursework completed through an accredited institution of higher education will be accepted to meet the training approval requirements.

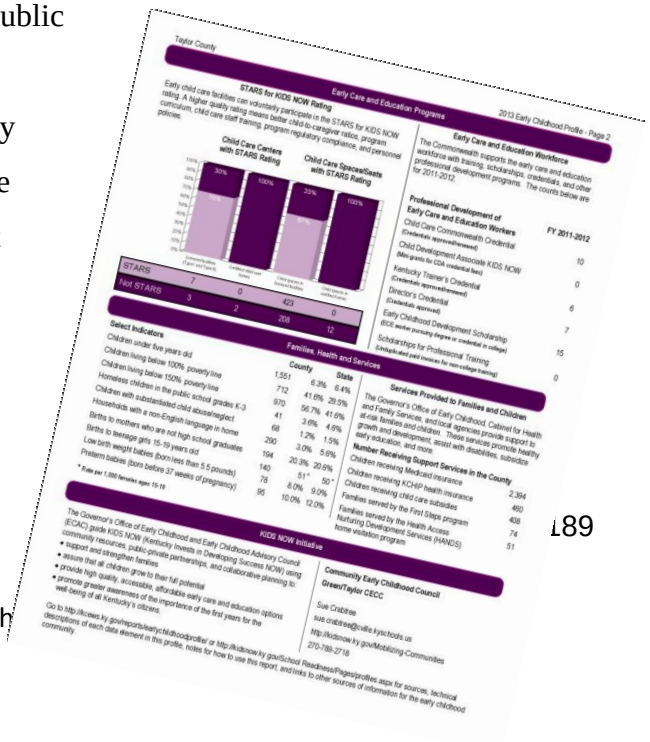
The KIDS NOW Scholarship program has built a strong higher education infrastructure throughout the state, awarding 17,806 scholarships totaling over $10 million to attend postsecondary institutions since 2011. Professional development has given the early childhood

education field in Kentucky a common language that child care, state-funded preschool, and Head Start programs and educators can all understand and use to build, blend and partner together. In addition, Kentucky has several major regional organizations that provide training and technical assistance (TA) services to early care, intervention and education professionals across the state, including:

- Child Care Aware (CCA), which began as Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), began in July of 2012 as a cross-sector partnership to support families' access to information and resources regarding high quality early child care. CCA also assists in increasing knowledge and demand for high quality ECE services; assists in providing and accessing PD opportunities and resources; and assists community stakeholders in accessing information and resources to increase their knowledge of high quality care. CCA also provides individualized child care referral services to families and provides a web portal for families to search for child care within any region of the state. Providers also continue to receive training through credentialed trainers and approved agencies, as well as help identifying and accessing training needs. In addition, CCA provides a TA coordinator in each location to support providers in meeting state licensing requirements.
- Early childhood Regional Training Centers (RTCs) are funded through the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Program Standards- School Readiness Branch and have staff available across the state to offer technical assistance and training to public preschool teachers and staff. RTC staff members offer regional trainings/workshops, on-site consultations, lending libraries of materials, as well as annual statewide and regional collaborative institutes.
- Child Care Health Consultants (a part of Healthy Start in Child Care), funded through the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Public Health, Early Childhood Development Branch. Consultants provide education and technical assistance to child care providers across the state to promote a healthy and safe environment for young children in out-of-home settings. Education offerings around the health, safety, nutrition and social/emotional needs of young children are provided; consultants are available through local health departments on a regional basis to provide services to every county in the State.
- The Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI), funded through the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Division of Child Care, consists of two components. The QEI seeks to

improve the quality of early care and education services by providing information, TA and access to supports needed to participate in the STARS for KIDS NOW Quality Rating System, as well as assistance with evaluating the effectiveness of services provided by child care facilities and homes. The QEI also provides assistance to Early Childhood Educators through Professional Development Counselors (PD Counselors) that are located in Kentucky Community and Technical College sites across the state. PD Counselors support scholars in the successful completion of a planned program of study and assist in the planning and implementation of a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) specific to the individual's goals and needs. The PD Counselor also facilitates the application processes for the Related Expenses and Milestone Achievement Awards.

- Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) ensure local understanding and childcare participation in STARS to earn or retain STARS ratings, and provide many PD training opportunities for childcare workers throughout the Commonwealth. The Councils have been proactive across the state and ensure the latest research regarding ECE is embedded in the content of provided trainings. CECCs are GOEC's go-to for ensuring local communities have a broad understanding of the School Readiness definition and help to provide a statewide understanding of newly released early childhood data, as explained below. CECCs support local early education providers in understanding the Early Learning Standards, and continue to work with families to ensure an understanding of early childhood development and the Brigance Kindergarten Screener throughout the community.
- The Head Start community in Kentucky accesses the same training networks as those Early Childhood Educators in licensed child care and public preschool Head Start ensures they meet the qualifications of the Federal Training Priorities by accessing these same services. The GOEC will be looking at simplifying and integrating Head Start training into the full complement of TA and trainings made available to ECE workers throughout the State.




Kentucky's PD Workgroup also has begun on-going conversations with the institutions of higher

education (IHEs) who oversee the Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) certification programs. These conversations and meetings are seen by all parties as an opportunity to gain knowledge from the field and provide support to all through new collaborations for early childhood educators. One of the goals already developed includes embedding the Professional Development Framework into the work culture, and making the **career lattice** (p. 56-57) a living document to give guidance to early childhood educators. Engaging in a continual dialogue with institutes of higher education enables the State of Kentucky to be a better resource and offer assistance in coordinating and streamlining the professional development system.

The PD Workgroup began evaluating the current system of available PD, looking for opportunities to strengthen the already strong and well-developed system of educator supports. As part of this evaluation, several sub-workgroups were created: TA, coaching, trainer competency, and higher education with the goal of making the system more responsive to changes throughout the ECE profession.

Within the past two years, a snapshot of ECE credentials were provided by county, on the Early Childhood Profile, and was created for CECCs to use to improve education and TA in their local service areas. The EC Profiles help the CECC with planning process and continue to build local capacity. Using the Profile and the Brigance Kindergarten Screener data, a more strategic, targeted, local community focus for ECE trainings can be realized. By looking at each community, center, individual and council need, the capacity of each community can be built based on the specific needs and gaps in learning identified for that area. This is a different way to look at data and improve child outcomes.

Building on the foundation currently in place and leveraging partners and delivery systems, areas of opportunity can be identified; certainly we can create a system that is more responsive to the needed changes in early childhood education – a system that first determines the gaps in educator learning and responds with solutions to those gaps. To begin this systemic change, trainer competencies and TA coaching can be used to ensure greater, more timely and personalized responsiveness within the profession.

To bring this point home, Kentucky has had a **long history** of providing support for the state's Early Childhood Workforce. Likewise, the Commonwealth has been and continues to be dedicated to providing Early Childhood Educators with a clear pathway to continually improve

and progress throughout their careers. Our plan to support the Early Childhood Workforce will continue this long held commitment through the following two key elements

- **A responsive professional development system**

  As detailed in Section B of our proposal, Kentucky will implement a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that includes all Early Learning and Development programs. Because the research is clear that Early Childhood Educator professional development affects child outcomes, all of the Early Childhood Educators participating in programs in the expanded STARS rating system will receive targeted, high priority professional development on a targeted number of high-yield subjects. The Professional Development Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council will work statewide with organizations who deliver professional development to Early Childhood Educators to provide them accessible, high-quality training opportunities they need in two priority areas:

  1. **Strengthening Families Framework.** As detailed in Sections A2 and C4, Kentucky will adopt a statewide framework of building family protective factors in families with Children with High Needs in order to reduce the negative effects of toxic stress. Strengthening Families will also be integrated into the expanded STARS rating system.
  2. **Adult Child Interactions.** Research clearly shows that when a child has high quality interaction with an intentional, caring adult their learning increases (Pianta, 2008). The Professional Development Workgroup will work with partner organizations to develop a plan to integrate these priorities into professional learning opportunities throughout the Commonwealth.

- **Unified Expanded Registry**

  Kentucky has long operated a training registry: the Early Care and Education-Training Records Information System or ECE-TRIS. Currently this system is mandatory for all licensed Early Learning and Development programs. However, the system is not currently utilized by Early Childhood Educators in public preschool programs. This includes sites that are "blended" with Head Start. Therefore, we will develop a plan to expand the current ECETRIS/registry system to include all Early Childhood Educators in statewide. The Professional Development Workgroup, along with staff support from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Department of Education and Cabinet for Health and Family

Services will work with the ECETRIS technical teams to design an expansion of the current registry system that will be a user-friendly tool to collect data on preschool educator professional development information. This team will also work to design data interface so that data from the Kentucky Department of Education system can be shared with ECE TRIS.

| D1- Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Anticipated Award Date | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Workgroup members identified and convened | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Begin research on ECE-TRIS system requirements for new interface | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Early Childhood Advisory Council<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Division of Child Care (CHFS)<br>ECE TRIS Project Manager |
| Create plan for system requirements identification, piloting and training process, importation of data, and roll-out implementation | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Early Childhood Advisory Council<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Division of Child Care (CHFS)<br>ECE TRIS Project Manager |
| Design, develop, and test of Pre-K system requirements | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | ECE TRIS Project Manager |
| Train and pilot new ECE-TRIS interface | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | ECE TRIS Project Manager<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Development of data import process from Infinite Campus into ECE-TRIS | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | ECE TRIS Project Manager<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood |

| D1- Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Statewide implementation of Preschool ECE-TRIS data interface | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | ECE TRIS Project Manager<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Begin Statewide ECE-TRIS roll-out campaign | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | Ky Department of Education<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Collect and analyze training data | | | | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | ECE TRIS<br>Ky Department of Education<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood |
| Create a statewide implementation plan | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC PD Workgroup |
| Statewide Strengthening Families and Adult/Child Interaction Trainings rolled out | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC PD Workgroup |
| Implement statewide plan – Strengthening Families / Adult Child Interaction | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC PD Workgroup<br>All training agencies across Kentucky, including but not limited to CECCs, RTCs, Child Care Aware |

# Section E1
# Children's Learning & Development

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## (E)(1) Understand the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry

Maya is almost 5 years old. In fact – and it's all she talks about at Miss Anita's – Maya gets to start kindergarten at the end of summer, which is just four Saturdays away. Maya's mom is taking her shopping soon for her first-day clothes, and there will be a new book-bag, too. They have agreed, though, that last year's lunch box will do since Maya will be eating in the lunch room most days – she gets to eat anything she wants for free! Knox will stay at Miss Anita's, but Maya will see him after school, Mom said. Maya is excited but nervous. Her friend Sarah is going, too, so it will be OK. Maya and Sarah are going to the school soon to take a test to see what they still need to learn; Miss Anita says a nice lady will ask her questions for a few minutes, and the questions will be very easy. Maya doesn't like new people much, but Miss Anita says the lady is very nice and has curly brown hair and freckles – like Maya. Still, Maya really doesn't like meeting new people. She wonders if they will let Mom go with her, or maybe Sarah? Sarah always knows all the answers.

### (E)(1)(a) Kindergarten entry assessment aligns with the State's ELD standards

When Maya arrives at Taylor County Elementary for the preschool open house, the nice lady with brown hair and freckles will administer the Brigance® Kindergarten Screen; within a few days, Maya's new teacher will talk with Connie about the results, pointing out a small area of concern they will all work on together. Certainly nothing serious – but, Maya's teacher will be working a little extra with Maya in the first few weeks of school. Connie is worried and relieved, all at the same time. She had no idea.

Kentucky piloted the Brigance® Kindergarten Screen in 2012; in August 2013, the tool was used in all Kentucky school districts. The screener will provide districts with an element of measuring a student's readiness for school across the five developmental competencies/domains. The screener provides community leaders and policy makers with specific indicators to direct resources and supports for early learning as well as public education. As noted in (A)(1)-12, the Brigance covers each of the domains, including language and literacy; cognition and general knowledge; approaches toward learning; physical well-being and motor development; and social and emotional development.

Perhaps more importantly, it provides Maya's new teacher an initial measure by which to set Maya's – and Sarah's – individual learning targets. The screen provides teachers with

information about individual children while providing districts information about their individual programs. It also aligns to the **Kentucky Early Childhood Standards**, as outlined in Section C1. Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards were developed to cover all five Essential Domains of School Readiness: Language and Literacy Development, Cognition and General Knowledge (including mathematics and early science development), Approaches Toward Learning, Physical Well-Being and Motor Development (including adaptive skills), and Social-Emotional Development.

In addition, our School Readiness Definition was designed from the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards and adopts a "whole child" approach. The Standards, developed in 2003 provide Kentucky with a framework to help families, educators and others understand what children should know and be able to do from birth through age four. This includes children with disabilities, Children with High Needs, children with developmental delays, and English Language Learners (ELL).

These readiness indicators provide an overview of primary school expectations for incoming kindergartners and provide guidance to families, communities, teachers, and child care providers on the specific strengths and needs of an individual child, as well as preparing children for school. The indicators are not expectations for each child, but rather hopes and aspirations for incoming students.

The Kentucky Department of Education currently funds the majority of the cost for implementing the common kindergarten screen; KDE also provides free professional development supports and technical assistance to districts and state agencies (including the GOEC).

**(E)(1)(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and purpose**

The Brigance® Kindergarten Screen (BKS) was selected for use in Kentucky and is a collection of quick and highly accurate assessments and data-gathering tools to use specifically with children entering kindergarten. All assessments in the BKS have been nationally standardized, producing results that are highly reliable, valid and accurate. In determining an appropriate Kindergarten Entry Assessment for use state-wide, Kentucky ensured that its selection would:

- Be administered to children approximately 15 days prior to the beginning of school or within the first 30 days of the start of kindergarten;
- Cover all essential domains of school readiness; and,

- Be valid and reliable for its intended purposes and targeted population(s) (including English learners and children with disabilities), as well as aligned with Early Learning and Development Standards.

The State set parameters for professional development for early childhood educators, and determined needed resources for schools and districts to support the implementation of the kindergarten entry assessment and quality data collection. The State also built capacity within the student information system (Infinite Campus) and Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System. The Kentucky Department of Education collaborated with the Early Childhood Advisory Council to identify an assessment that met the criteria for appropriateness and was aligned with existing Kentucky Early Learning and Development Standards. The chosen assessment was selected utilizing the state procurement process and fulfills the state regulation requiring its use by all schools and districts in Kentucky.

**(E)(1)(c) Standards are developmentally, culturally, linguistically appropriate**

As noted above, and throughout this proposal, the Brigance has been adopted as Kentucky's kindergarten screener. It was piloted in 2012 in 450 of Kentucky's 669 public elementary schools with 31,480 children. In August 2013, **all kindergarten students** in the Commonwealth were assessed; data will be released later this year. The Brigance is not used to determine eligibility for kindergarten; for overall classroom instruction; or as a longitudinal measurement of individual student performance. Rather, the screener is a snapshot, a moment in time, of how a child is progressing. If a child is screened and a concern is noted, it is an opportunity for further assessment. The screener is a point in time tool that communicates to teachers (individual students) and policy makers (aggregate data).

**(E)(1)(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System**

Schools report their screen results to the On-line Management System (OMS) provided by Curriculum Associates (Brigance vendor). From there, the screener data is placed into the Kentucky Department of Education's Infinite Campus and later migrated to Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System where it may be shared with other agencies, as appropriate. The readiness data will inform future decision-making and facilitate deliberate planning for programs and services that improve early childhood outcomes. Data is collected in a manner consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws. This data is also used to

complete the Early Childhood Profiles, the one-page county level report that is distributed through our CECCs. The profiles are meant to be a quick reference for communities to gauge areas of need in Early Childhood.

**(E)(1)(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources**

As noted in A2, the Kentucky Department of Education currently funds the majority of the cost for implementing the common kindergarten screen; KDE also provides free professional development supports and technical assistance to districts and state agencies (including the GOEC). Kentucky's school districts do incur costs to implement the screen including, but not limited to, tool translation and interpretive services and staff support to screen children (substitutes or additional pay if screening before school). No part of the administration of the kindergarten screener will be funded through RTT-ELC funds. Again, Kentucky implemented the screener in full in August 2013 for all Kentucky schools districts.

# Section E2
# Building Early Learning Data Systems

Kentucky All★STARs: Accelerating Learning Statewide through an Advanced Rating System

## (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system

As a leader in statewide longitudinal data system (LDS) development, Kentucky understands the importance of measuring progress, targeting support and answering basic policy questions through the use of appropriate data collection and use. Being able to close achievement gaps and prepare all children for success in school and in life starts with knowing baseline information, such as where children are in their learning, what needs they might have, and what will best meet those needs.

The Commonwealth has one of the broadest and most inclusive longitudinal data systems in the country. Being able to utilize data to inform policy questions which reach across multiple agencies or programs is a critical priority. Governor Beshear has acted on this with two Executive Orders and has signed legislation into law to incorporate this priority into Kentucky statutes. The statutes created a central authority to collect, link and utilize data to measure and evaluate education across all levels, which requires the data to be linked in an independent longitudinal data system.

The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS), which houses Kentucky's LDS, has successfully linked some early childhood, K-12, post-secondary, workforce, and employment data together. KCEWS, working with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC), provides the appropriate platform to add early childhood programs and services, student, educator and provider data. This combined data will give policy makers an informed picture of a child's progress, as well as program and early care and education workforce data. The Commonwealth's plan is to combine the Early Childhood Expansion system with the existing infrastructure of the LDS. Once combined, data-linking, de-identification and reporting structures would be available to bring together early childhood, student, educator, and program-level data and link it with currently available system data. This will provide a cost effective, sustainable answer to the need for more early childhood data throughout the State.

Kentucky has adopted the Brigance® Kindergarten Screen (BKS) to measure kindergarten readiness across the state. The BKS was piloted in 107 school districts in the 2012-13 school year, and is being fully implemented across the state this fall (2013). The BKS is a thoroughly evaluated national screening tool which identifies a child's readiness based on the five cognitive and social/emotional domains. This ensures educators will provide individual children with developmentally appropriate educational instruction to improve their school success.

In addition to kindergarten readiness data, the Commonwealth collects information on the prior 12 months of early care for the kindergartners. This information identifies local childcare programs, Head Starts, state-funded preschools and home care facilities. By linking this data together, the state will be able to identify high-quality early care and education programs, measure quality and whether there is improvement in the program over time, and identify characteristics of effective programs which will help inform best practices and potentially incorporated into other programs.

Effective use of early childhood data can inform policy and drive systemic change, giving policy makers and early care and education providers tools needed to meet the needs of our children, especially those with high needs. The state is working to be able to capture as much available data as possible to address policy questions regarding the Commonwealth's students.

We have made it a priority in Kentucky to adopt and utilize the 10 Fundamentals of Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems developed by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative. The Fundamentals will expand available early childhood data within the LDS structure. The Commonwealth has collected the data items in the 10 Fundamentals and is now working to expand the LDS to include this and other available data.

**The 10 Fundamentals of Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data Systems are:**

1. Unique state-wide child identifier
2. Child-level demographic & program participation information
3. Child-level data on development
4. Ability to link child-level data with K-12 & other key data systems
5. Unique program site identifier with the ability to link children with the early care and education workforce
6. Program site data on structure, quality & work environment
7. Unique early care and education identifier with ability to link with program sites & children
8. Individual early care and education workforce demographics, including education and professional development
9. State governance body to manage data collection and use
10. Transparent privacy protection & security practices & policies

Kentucky has established an Early Childhood Data Committee of the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The Data Committee will govern the use of data and will work directly with KCEWS staff on early childhood data and reporting. The governance structure, memorandums of agreement between agencies, and infrastructure for the LDS Early Childhood Data Expansion have already been developed and put into place. In addition, the core parts of the LDS have already been developed and tested. This gives a significant presence and strong start to the work ahead.

Looking ahead, we will continue to identify policy questions that best inform child outcome improvement and increase school readiness, particularly for children with high needs. We will then decide on additional data points and information to include in the system based on how they would inform policy and practice. The KCEWS has identified a list of critical policy questions along with participating agencies and stakeholder groups to guide the data collection, policy and practice. The following three critical questions were identified to ensure data collected through the early childhood expansion offers a global perspective and provides information to improve instruction, practices, services and policies. The questions Kentucky will seek to address are:

- To what degree do different early childhood curricula or methods appear to influence students' levels of kindergarten readiness and success in early grades?
- To what degree do early childhood practitioners' and teachers' academic credentials appear to have an influence over student performance in early childhood programs in terms of preparing them for kindergarten?
- How well do students transfer from early childhood to primary school, elementary school, middle school and high school?

Our plan is to expand the LDS to include more early childhood data sources from the state's early childhood data programs. Kentucky has many databases for early childhood programs and information across the spectrum from prenatal to school entry that will be added to the LDS. With the addition of the early childhood expansion, the LDS will have the capacity to continue to track teacher performance, assess quality and measure sustainable gains and individual child outcomes. This has been and continues to be an extremely productive, coordinated effort among agencies and gives the ability to inform policy and practice. The early childhood expansion was envisioned as a pivotal step in developing and increasing capacity in Kentucky's data systems and communicating with other agencies to improve quality, inform coordination of child

transition points (e.g., preschool to kindergarten), and provide information on local, state and federal investments. This expansion will serve as an essential communication tool for parents, providers, teachers, and local, regional and state agencies. The database will provide the data needed to improve child outcomes, professional development, program quality, and inform individualized instruction development. The data in the LDS will be linked with additional student-level data to provide a more robust, accurate picture of early childhood services for the state to use for policy and decision making.

**(E)(2)(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements**

Kentucky currently tracks critical child, program and workforce data elements in a coordinated early learning data system, and has made significant progress in collecting all of the essential data elements within the last two years. These collected elements include information about early childhood education, social programs and health programs. With a goal of including all required elements into the LDS, the following table summarizes the Commonwealth's current progress in collecting all essential data:

| Essential Data Element | LDS Progress | Other Data Collection Progress |
|---|---|---|
| 1. A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, including kindergarten entry assessment data | LDS includes a unique internal, Globally Unique Identifier (GUID) which links data across agencies throughout education and workforce. Kindergarten entry assessment data, existing early childhood data and early childhood data brought in the system all abide by this criteria. | To be developed |
| 2. A unique statewide worker/teacher identifier | Educators and other workers are assigned a GUID when brought into LDS. | To be developed |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3. A unique program site identifier | Unique program site identifier will be included in the LDS Early Childhood Data Expansion | Kentucky's TQRIS, the STARS system, includes a unique program site identifier. |
| 4. Child and family demographic information | The LDS includes demographic information on children. Data on families will be added with the inclusion of HANDS and First Steps. As additional early childhood programs are added, additional information on families will be included. | Information on families is currently collected though individual program data. |
| 5. Early Childhood Educator demographic information including data on educational attainment and state credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information | The LDS includes demographic, educational attainment and state credentials and licenses for all educators in public preschool. The LDS Early Childhood Expansion will include information on professional development for early childhood educators and workers. | Additional information on early childhood educators is collected through individual program data. Information on professional development is also collected through these systems. |
| 6. Data on the program's structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, and work environment, including all applicable data reported as part of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System | The inclusion of STARS and related child care is a critical piece of the LDS Early Childhood Data Expansion. This source of information will include program level information such as capacity and the TQRIS (STARS) rating. | Kentucky's TQRIS, STARS, currently collects and maintains various data related to children in the voluntary system. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7. Child-level program participation and attendance data | LDS collects child-level program participation and attendance data for students enrolled in public preschool. Data on additional programs will be added in the expansion. | To be developed |
| 8. Individual early care and education workforce demographics, including education and professional development | Collected in the Professional Development Registry (ECETRIS) | Will be tied to the expanded STARS and to student settings via kindergarten screener |
| 9. State governance body to manage data collection and use | Operated through the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics | Continuing to connect data sets across systems |
| 10.Transparent privacy protection & security practices & policies | Policies and practices in place; monitored by KCEWS | Developed |

**(E)(2)(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements**

ECAC is working with KCEWS to develop an Early Childhood Data Expansion process to allow data from additional programs, providers and services to be collected and matched, with a goal to automate some current data collection processes already implemented to make them sustainable. Currently, data from public K-12, post-secondary, teacher preparation and licensure, adult education and workforce data has been integrated. Early childhood data being expanded within the LDS will include additional student and program level information.

Data is brought into the LDS through an existing uniform tool which provides immediate feedback about data quality and consistency. Once child-level data is uploaded, it is added to the LDS and matched with existing K-12, post-secondary and workforce records.

Child-level data on kindergarten readiness is collected through the BKS and through Infinite Campus (Kentucky's Student Information System). This statewide process ensures uniform data collection of all elements related to kindergarten readiness.

Participating agencies with the LDS have access to the De-Identified Reporting System (DRS) through an online, user-friendly tool that allows for complete data security, while providing the exchange of data needed. Current participating LDS agencies include: KDE, the Council on Post-Secondary Education (CPE), the Education and Professional Standards Board (EPSB) and the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

**(E)(2)(c) Facilitates the exchange of data among agencies**

KCEWS facilitates the exchange of data into the LDS from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), some public early childhood providers, and all other participating agencies using standard data structures, formats and definitions. A business analysis was conducted and the information utilized to create definitions and formats for BKS, prior placement, Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS), and First Steps program data inclusion.

KCEWS maintains an extensive code book and data dictionary of all included elements. This ensures all existing and new data elements are collected in a consistent method over time, with clear descriptions of each data element and its origination. All data elements added as part of the Early Childhood Data Expansion will be included in this code book to facilitate the exchange and access of data elements.

**(E)(2)(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible and easy to use**

To aid in continuous improvement and decision making, KCEWS uses common reporting tools and analysis to provide timely, relevant, accessible information that is easy for Early Learning and Development Programs (ELD) and Early Childhood Educators to use. KCEWS created and produced the first State and County Early Childhood Profile (ECP) report in the spring of 2013 in collaboration with Kentucky's Early Childhood Advisory Council and GOEC. This report provided every county in Kentucky with data to assist in developing local strategies to ensure all children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn, ready to grow, and ready to succeed. As part of the plan to ensure access to timely, relevant data KCEWS will be making this an annual report. The 2013 Profiles contain results from the BKS pilot which was launched in 107 school districts in 2012. The Profiles also provide information about participation in publicly funded pre-schools,

Head Starts and child care, and about the quality and availability of childcare and the education of the early childhood workforce. In addition, the Profiles provide demographic data representing key indicators of potential barriers to success for young children and their families as well as public health and social service programs which could help. KCEWS would like to add yearly data extracts from KDE which includes kindergarten readiness data, and import child-level BKS information when available from KDE. Doing so will ensure generated information in the ECP is timely and relevant for ELDs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision-making, as well as to share with parents and other community stakeholders.

The Early Childhood Expansion will allow for the inclusion of more early childhood program data into the LDS system. Inherent in the LDS is the De-Identified Reporting System (DRS) which includes de-identified information stripped of individual identifiers. Approved agencies have access to the DRS through an online, user-friendly tool that allows agency representatives to generate reports and analyses from linked data in the system. Current participating agencies include: KDE, CPE, EPSB and the KHEAA. The KCEWS research and development staff has access to the DRS and are able to facilitate and respond to information requests about linked data. The Early Childhood Data Expansion will allow for annual ECPs for all Kentucky counties and for the State as a whole. This process, along with the addition of BKS data, will ensure information generated is accurate, timely and accessible for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators, and can be used for continuous improvement and decision-making.

**(E)(2)(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with laws**

KCEWS meets the data system oversight requirements through their data access and use policy, as well as other utilized documentation to ensure the quality, privacy and integrity of the data contained within the data system. KCEWS complies with all federal and state privacy laws, may not release data or information if disclosure is prohibited under relevant federal or state privacy laws, and must remain in compliance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. sec. 1232g and KRS 151B.133). State education officials in Kentucky determined that they have the authority to collect data about education and workforce to evaluate progress of programs based on U.S. Department of Education guidance issued with the 2008 FERPA regulations (73 Fed. Reg. 74822 – 2008).

The architecture of the LDS was specifically created to ensure privacy and confidentiality of

all data. Individual-level data is separated from identifiable records prior to being added to the De-Identified Reporting System (DRS). Data listed in the first question of this document are stored in the LDS without personally identifiable information (such as Social Security numbers, agency identification numbers, names and/or other unique characteristics). This de-identification process ensures all individual-level data can be analyzed without disclosing the identity of any individual.

Kentucky will undertake the following key activities to fully achieve the implementation described above:

- **Early Childhood County Profile (ECP) Report – *target publication date is February.***
  The ECPs will be produced for each Kentucky County as in 2012. KCEWS will work collaboratively with early childhood stakeholders as necessary steps are taken to define the report layout and content, gather and analyze the data, develop technical notes, vet the final draft and publish the final product. Steps include:
  - Develop final layout and data requirements with GOEC Data subgroup; include executive-level stakeholders to seek concurrence and approval;
  - Design CRYSTAL layout for State, County, and Technical Notes which will be used to generate all final reports to be posted on the website;
  - Gather data for up to 200 selected data fields which will be used to generate up to 100 presentation fields, from up to 10 sources;
  - Include BKS in data analysis and gathering processes, include related information into the KCEWS Code Book;
  - Perform analysis and cleaning as necessary to prepare date for presentation and publication;
  - Create and assemble data gathered into feeder tables for reports and technical notes;
  - Vet all planned reports with key stakeholders; and
  - Publish Early Childhood County Profile.
- **Head Start – pilot (Acquire data into the LDS)**
  The KCEWS will work with Head Start, GOEC and KDE to identify what Head Start data should be included in the LDS, and how the data can be used to support policy decisions. Bringing new data into the LDS is labor-intensive, and the KCEWS will rely heavily on the data providers to help better understand the data and identify business rules about the data.

Steps include:

- Determine what data the Kentucky Head Start Association (KHSA) is willing to provide;
- Conduct a focus group with Head Start, KDE and GOEC to determine policy questions and metrics;
- Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the KCEWS Code Book;
- Design and develop data structures, matching, cleaning and processing steps;
- Import basic tables and data from Madison County Head Start system as sample/trial;
- Conduct Quality Assurance Testing and review; and
- Design and develop WEBI Universe to support Head Start combined data for Kentucky.

- **HANDS**

  Acquiring HANDS data will be similar to that of Head Start. Steps include:

  - Finalize the MOU between KCEWS and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS);
  - Confirm identified data elements from HANDS to acquire child-level information regarding entry/exit in the programs and any related measure of progress;
  - Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Code Book;
  - Design and develop data structures and import, matching, cleaning and processing steps;
  - Conduct Quality Assurance testing and review; and
  - Include HANDS data elements into reports and research.

- **First Steps**

  Acquiring First Steps data will be similar to that of Head Start and HANDS data. Steps include:

  - Finalize the MOU between KCEWS and CHFS;
  - Confirm identified data elements from First Steps to acquire child-level information regarding entry/exit in the programs and any related measure of progress;
  - Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Code Book;
  - Design and develop data structures and import, matching, cleaning and processing steps;
  - Conduct Quality Assurance testing and review; and
  - Include First Steps data elements into reports and research.

- **STARS and related Child Care – (Acquire data into the LDS)**

Acquiring the STARS data will be similar to that of Head Start, HANDS, and First Steps data. The data to be included from this source includes daycare level information such as capacity and STARS ratings. Steps include:

- Develop and finalize the MOU between KCEWS and CHFS-DCC;
- Confirm identified data elements from DCC to acquire daycare center level information regarding capacity, STARS rating, funding and any related measure of progress;
- Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Code Book;
- Design and develop data structures and import, matching, cleaning and processing steps;
- Conduct Quality Assurance testing and review; and
- Include STARS data elements into reports and research.

- **HDI University of Kentucky – KEDS – (Acquire data into the LDS)**

  KCEWS currently receives data from the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute about pre-school students who participate in state funded pre-school programs. Steps include:

  - Receive and process KEDS file on an annual basis.

- **Identification and inclusion of additional early childhood programs – (identify data and acquire data into the LDS)**

  Kentucky has many databases for early childhood programs across the spectrum from pre-natal to school entry. These can be added to existing data in LDS and linked with existing public K-12, post-secondary, teacher licensure and workforce data. The identification of all these existing programs and data sources and their inclusion in LDS offer timely access to data around early childhood programs and child outcomes. Steps include:

  - Identify early childhood programs and data sources;
  - Create and finalize MOUs;
  - Confirm identified data elements from programs to acquire child-level information regarding entry/exit in programs and any related measure of progress;
  - Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Code Book;
  - Design and develop data structures and import, matching, cleaning and processing steps;
  - Conduct Quality Assurance testing and review; and
  - Include data elements into reports and research.

Roles in this implementation process are as follows:

- The ECAC Data Workgroup advises on the LDS Early Childhood Data Expansion.
- The KCEWS will provide guidance and technical assistance and link the provided data.
- Participating agencies will provide data to LDS to be linked with other sources.
- CECCs will provide local technical assistance to local community early care and education programs.
- KDE will provide technical assistance to those collecting BKS data and public pre-schools.

| E2- Expanded Longitudinal Data Systems Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Anticipated Award Date | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Data gathered and scrubbed for Early Childhood Profile release | | | X | X | | | X | X | | | X | X | | | X | X | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Develop final layout and data requirements | | | | X | X | | | X | X | | | X | X | | | X | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Subcommittee |
| Release of Early Childhood Profile | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Kentucky Department of Education<br>Division of Child Care (CHFS) |
| Complete MOUs between agency partners and KCEWS | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Determine required data elements from agency partners | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Workgroup<br>HANDS<br>First Steps<br>Division of Child Care |

| E2- Expanded Longitudinal Data Systems Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Center's Codebook | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Design, develop data structures, import, matching, cleaning and process steps | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Conduct Quality Assurance testing and review | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Include agency partners data elements into reports and research | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Workgroup |
| Conduct focus groups to determine policy questions and metrics for Head Start Pilot | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>Head Start<br>Kentucky Department of Education |
| Complete metadata and supporting information to populate the Center's Codebook | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Import basic tables and data from Madison County Head Start system as a trial | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Head Start data fully imported into KCEWS data system | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |

| E2- Expanded Longitudinal Data Systems Milestones | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | | Year 4 | | | | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr 4 | Qtr 1 | Qtr 2 | Qtr 3 | Qtr4 | |
| Identify early childhood programs and data sources | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Workgroup |
| Create and finalize MOUs for those identified | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Workgroup |
| Confirm identified data elements from programs to acquire entry/exit of programs and related measures of progress | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics<br>Governor's Office of Early Childhood<br>ECAC Data Workgroup |
| Complete metadata and supporting information for indentified programs and to populate the Center's Codebook | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Design, develop data structures, import, matching, cleaning and process steps | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Conduct Quality Assurance Testing and Review for new program data | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |
| Identified programs data is fully imported into KCEWS data system | | | | | | | | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | → | | Ky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics |

## Competitive Priorities

**Priority 2: Including All early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS**

In Section B, we describe our High Quality Plan to expand our existing TQRIS – the STARS for KIDS NOW rating and improvement system. We will move 100 percent of all licensed early learning and development programs and all state-funded preschools to our TQRIS program by making participation mandatory. Further, all early learning and development programs caring for two or more non-related children will be required under a revised statute to become licensed. We will move from just 41 percent of our licensed programs participating (voluntary) to 100 percent of our ELDs and our state-funded preschools under the expanded STARS rating system (mandatory). As described in Sections A and B, our success in working with the Kentucky General Assembly for enabling legislation that supports young children. Just as public ratings for restaurants are mandatory, so will be the STARS ratings for early child care programs.

a) Our TQRIS will expand to include all ELD programs including child care, state-funded preschools and Head State programs. Currently preschools and school based Head Starts are not required to be licensed; they are regulated through their respective state funders. Our STARS Redesign Team will work to utilize those existing requirements as part of the quality rating structure. The increase in early care programs – from 41 percent of licensed programs through our voluntary system to 100 percent in the redesigned STARS – will be absorbed within the TQRIS.
b) As noted throughout our proposal and particularly in B2, all programs – 100 percent – will participate in our expanded TQRIS.

**Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning (Section E1)**

We have responded to Criterion E1.

**Priority 4: Creating Preschool through Third Grade Approaches**

Kentucky All★STARS includes a number of strategies that reach well beyond early care and development programs through the early elementary grades.

a. **Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.** In Section C1 – and throughout the proposal – we outline the alignment of Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards to the standards of the early school grades, the Kentucky Core Academic Standards. In 2011, the Kentucky

Early Learning Standards were realigned to reflect the new Kentucky core Academic Standards adopted by the Kentucky Department of Education. The Early Childhood Standards are built upon the developmental domains of School Readiness.

b. **Strengthening Families.** The Protective Factors Framework will support families and children throughout our local communities. By training and professionally developing early childhood educators and service providers (including health, mental health, and other resource providers), we will ensure our High Need families will receive the supports they need to build resilience in their homes.

c. **Preparation Programs, Professional Development.** In Section A and D1, we define the Career Lattice and a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework established through the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Advisory Council. Our professional development aligns to the Kentucky Core Academic Standards. Our Early Learning Leadership Networks provide a chance for early childhood educators and early grades teachers to learn together. And we provide scholarships and incentives to encourage ECEs to seek higher levels of education and credentialing.

d. **Systems of Collaboration.** As noted above, we will implement Strengthening Families as a collaborative training model that will impact all communities, particularly for High Need families. In addition, we will implement the Toyota bornlearning® Academies to directly link families with young children **to the elementary schoolhouse**. In addition, High Need families with young children will have access to Family Resource and Youth Services Center staff members, who will teaching the Toyota bornlearning® Academy curriculum. FRYSC staff members serve High Need families year-round, working in every high-need elementary school statewide. Funded through the Kentucky Education Reform Act, FRYSCs work to improve academic outcomes for children by eliminating barriers of every kind – including food, school supplies, clothing and more. Not only will the Toyota bornlearning® Academies be held at the school building; it will introduce our families with young children to an invaluable schoolhouse and community resource.

e. **Longitudinal Data System.** Described in Section A and E2, we are working with the Kentucky Center on Education and Workforce Statistics to create links between various data systems to the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System. In the very near future, we will

have access to the entire early learning universe to ensure effective, data driven decision making across systems.

f. **Other.** Kentucky has implemented the Brigance® Kindergarten Screener in all Kentucky school districts. The screener will provide districts with an element of measuring a student's readiness for school across the five developmental competencies/domains. Beginning in 2013, the screener will include "prior settings" data that will allow us to make observations, in the aggregate, about the quality of early learning and development programs in different types of settings.

The Brigance is not used to determine eligibility for kindergarten; for overall classroom instruction; or as a longitudinal measurement of individual student performance. Rather, the screener is a snapshot of a moment in time of how a child is progressing. If a child is screened and a concern is noted, it is an opportunity for further assessment. The screener is a point in time tool that communicates to teachers (individual students) and policy makers (aggregate data).

**Priority 5: Addressing the Needs of Children in Rural Areas**

Kentucky is a rural state. Of our 173 school districts, 115 qualify for the 2013 Rural Low Income Schools Program or the 2013 Small Rural School Achievement Program through the U.S. Department of Education. These are small communities and towns of generally less than 25,000 people. In addition, those communities make up about one-third of the overall public school population in the Commonwealth.

a. A number of our strategies are intended to directly support children and families in rural areas, including the Strengthening Families Approach, coordinated through our local CECCs, and the Toyota bornlearning® Academies, which will be coordinated through our FRYSCs. As noted above, FRYSC staff members are locally-based resources for children and families and are located in every high-need elementary school in Kentucky.

In addition, our STARS marketing campaign, noted in B3, speaks directly to families in rural areas by leveraging key community assets – churches, Wal-Mart, the health department – as key touch-points for our families.

b. By including **all early care and learning programs** in our mandatory TQRIS expansion, we will improve the early learning opportunities for all young children in our rural

communities. In addition, the Strengthening Families will help eliminate barriers for families, provide links to resources, and connect families to the local school. In our rural communities, elementary schools are typically the hub of local activity and resources. Barriers are also eliminated through collaborations with our FRYSC staff members. Finally, our professional development networks are considerate of early childhood educators in rural areas; typical trainings include regional Super Saturday events that allow ECEs an opportunity to learn and network close to home. Coaching and mentoring also provide for locally-based PD support that will improve early care programs.

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## Section VIII: Budget narrative and charts

### (A)(4)(b) Describes … how the State will effectively & efficiently use funding

Governor Beshear has made funding for early childhood programs one of five key priorities during his tenure. Despite significant funding cuts throughout the Commonwealth, the Governor has worked with the Kentucky legislature to protect funding for early learning, and has ensured that funding for children with high needs has remained steady over the past five years. Because of this focus at the executive level, as well as Kentucky's dedication to hold firm to funding for Early Learning and Development Programs and for Children with high needs, RTT–ELC funds will be effectively and efficiently utilized to further the outlined plan. This includes, as outlined below, the use of one-time investments in infrastructure, including improvements to our tiered quality rating and improvement system (STARS expansion) and longitudinal data systems (systems inclusion across multiple data sets and types).

We provide following specific responses for (A)(4)(b)(1) and (2); budget tables and the accompanying narrative are found in Section VIII.

### (A)(4)(b)(1) Use funding in a manner that is adequate to support activities in the Plan

Because of the work Kentucky has already completed in our dedication to our youngest citizens, we established a budget that is adequate and appropriate for the projects we are instituting. The majority of requested funding – 93 percent – is dedicated to the STARS expansion, including the implementation of new measurements and supports for Early Childhood Educators, so that the largest number of children in the Commonwealth may be impacted. The expanded STARs will shift the rating system from a voluntary system that includes only a portion of Kentucky's early learning and development programs to a mandatory system that will include all programs. It will inform families easily and effectively of the quality of each early care program in Kentucky and in their local communities.

Kentucky has an ongoing history of implementing multi-agency projects, including the initial the implementation of our existing STARS quality rating system (2000). More recent expansion supporting that system – including scholarship programs, professional development, expansion of the number of CECCs, etc. – were completed with limited funds via the expansion of partnerships and aligning goals across agency silos. We have continued those relationships and partnerships to ensure the ongoing impact of these important programs will continue once program funds have been expended.

Each portion of the project is sustainable with existing agreements with state partners (Appendix, MOUs). Funding for the STARS expansion as well as the implementation of Strengthening Families, Toyota bornlearning® Academies, and work around the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System all represent one-time investments. Staff positions for the ramp-up of programs and systems will, for the most part, not be continued after Year 4; rather, education professionals who are hired will likely be contracted on individual MOUs that will allow them to return to their school districts following their service to the project. This is a common practice with Kentucky investment funds.

**(A)(4)(b)(2) Use funding in a manner that includes costs that are reasonable & necessary**

The Commonwealth will ensure that it maintains the budget as detailed in this proposal, and that contractual services and purchases will be in accordance with Kentucky Procurement policy and law. With our largest project and 93% of the budget being allocated to expanding the STARS rating system, Kentucky's work over the last two years has ensured that we are providing the most up-to-date information on costs for the STARS expansion.

The majority of expenditures are for the personnel needed to ramp up and implement the work of Kentucky All★STARs. This includes the technology support for the Longitudinal Data System, the design and implementation of the STARS expansion, the implementation of the Strengthening Families Program and the Toyota bornlearning® Academy program. The salary and fringe rates listed in (A)(4)(b)(3) for personnel to be hired, are based upon current state salary schedules and anticipated levels of expertise for specific positions.

Notably, Kentucky will use the RTT–ELC program funds to leverage our partnerships with other state agencies and, critically, to provide the initial seed money for the development of our expanded systems. Each portion of the Plan is sustainable with existing agreements with our state partners. In 2017, the Commonwealth will sustain and support the ongoing programming.

**(A)(4)(b)(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies…**

The following budget narrative outlines funds budgeted for each participating state agency, including:

- The Governor's Office of Early Childhood (fiscal agent)
- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS)
- Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)
- Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC)

**Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC)**

Personnel

- Project coordinator (1)
  - To ensure mission integrity of the ALL STARS programs and coordinate across agencies and sectors to improve quality in early care and education programs.
  - Salary: $55,000 plus 41% fringe
  - Total: $75,550
  - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Data Analyst (1)
  - Salary: $45,000 plus 41% fringe
  - Total: $63,450
- Professional Development Coordinator (1)
  - Salary: $55,000 plus 41% fringe
  - Total: $75,550
  - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Strengthening Families Coordinator (1)
  - Salary: $45,000 plus 41% fringe
  - Total: $63,450
  - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Family Engagement Coordinator (1)
  - To provide information to families, partners, and early care and education programs.
  - Salary: $58,000 plus 41% fringe
  - Total: $81,780
  - Full time position with 1950 annual hours

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**Total Salaries:** $258,000 each grant year

**Total for Fringe:** $105,780 each grant year

**Total for Personnel and Fringe:** $1,455,120

Travel

- Travel expenses for Strengthening Families training in Year 1 for 12 early childhood program coordinators from agencies implementing Strengthening Families to attend. $58,000
- Travel for staff to meet with local early care and education programs across the Commonwealth. $2,000 each grant year.
- Year 1: $60,000
- Years 2-4: $2,000

**Travel Total:** $66,000

Training Stipends

- $636,550 in Years 1-4 to build capacity in our professional development system around the quality rating system, school readiness strategies and Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.

**Training Stipends Total:** $2,546,200

**GOEC Total Direct Costs: $4,067,320**

**Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws:**

Toyota bornLEARNING Academy funds for local schools

Funds will be used for travel stipends for trainings, purchasing of curriculum, data processing, as well as material for recruitment and retention of families.

- Year 1: $62,500
- Year 2: $125,000
- Year 3: $212,500
- Year 4: $275,000

**Toyota bornLEARNING Academy Total:** $675,000

Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

- $100,000 per year set aside for GOEC
- **Total:** $400,000

**Total Funds Requested for GOEC: $5,142,320**

**Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS):**

Personnel

Toyota bornLEARNING Academy:

- Project Implementation Coordinator (1)
    - For the implementation of the Toyota bornLEARNING Academy in schools across the Commonwealth.
    - Salary: $45,000 plus 41% fringe total: $63,450
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours

Kentucky ALLSTARS:

- Project Implementation Coordinator (1)
    - For the implementation of the expansion of Kentucky's TQRIS.
    - Salary: $50,000 plus 41% fringe total: $70,500
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Anchors (8)
    - for inter-rater reliability in the TQRIS
    - Salary: $48,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $541,440
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
    - Will be hired July 1, 2014
- Quality Coordinators (50)
    - To provide technical assistance and mentoring to early care and education programs for the TQRIS.
    - Salary: $32,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $2,256,000
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
    - Will be hired October 1, 2014
- TQRIS Quality Raters (18)
    - Salary $34,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $862,920
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
    - Will be hired January 2015

- Section Supervisor for the Quality Coordinators and Quality Raters (1)
    - Salary: $40,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $56,400
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
    - Will be hired January 2015
- Quality Initiatives Section Support Staff (3)
    - For program operations including report approval, payments, monitor raters, and provide training to raters.
    - Salary: $37,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $156,510
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
    - Will be hired January 2015

Personnel for CHFS:

- Year 1: $687,000
- Year 2: $2,842,000
- Year 3: $2,842,000
- Year 4: $2,842,000

**Personnel Total for CHFS:** $9,213,000

Fringe for CHFS:

- Year 1: $281,670
- Year 2: $1,148,610
- Year 3: $1,148,610
- Year 4: $1,148,610

**Fringe Total for CHFS:** $3,727,500

Travel for CHFS:

- In-state travel for the 50 STARS Quality Coordinators at $4,900 per person in years 2-4
    - In Year 1 Travel will be 25% of $4,900 (STARS Quality Coordinators are hired on October 1, 2014.)

- Travel for STARS Quality Coordinators to provide technical assistance and mentoring for early care and education programs to improve quality and overall school readiness.
    - In-state travel for 18 STARS Raters $2800 per person Years 2-4
- Travel for STARS Raters to rate early care and education programs across their service area.
- Travel for Raters and Quality Coordinators is essential to access and increase the quality of early care and education programs in the Kentucky ALL STARS TQRIS.

CHFS Travel:

- Year 1: $75,000
- Year 2: $295,400
- Year 3: $295,400
- Year 4: $295,400

**Total Travel for CHFS:** $961,200

CHFS Supplies:

- Computers in Year 1, as well as printing costs and office supplies for 1 quarter of the year: $108,750
- Year 2: $235,000 printing costs and office supplies
- Year 3: $235,000 printing costs and office supplies
- Year 4: $235,000 printing costs and office supplies

**Total Supplies Cost for CHFS:** $813,750

Contractual costs for CHFS:

- Contract with Eastern Kentucky University's Early Care and Education Training Records Information System (ECE-TRIS) to include data tracking for Head Start and Pre-K programs. ECE-TRIS is the Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care's current data system for tracking training attendance of all early care and education professionals. This information is used by CHFS to meet the needs of DCC Central Office management, DRCC licensing personnel, and a

variety of early care and education professionals including providers, facility owners, training agencies and Kentucky credentialed trainers. Estimates for inclusion and reporting on Pre-K teachers is the addition of approximately 1,400 new Pre-K teachers and teacher's assistants with a minimum 18 clock hours of training credits required annually.

- Year 1: $274,012
- Year 2: $274,788
- Year 3: $281,117
- Year 4: $287,605

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**Total contractual cost for CHFS:** $1,117,522

**Total Direct Costs:** $15,832,972

- **Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.**

  For purposes of this application, a conceptual model is provided to indicate how the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) payments are envisioned to be re-engineered to incentivize more providers to undertake advancement in the quality rating system and incentivize more day care providers to meet the need for infant and toddler care.

  During the planning phase, a more sophisticated analysis will be undertaken in order to refine the payment model. This will require extensive knowledge of the new TQRIS requirements in order to determine the relative increases in cost elements that centers will incur as they seek to become STAR rated for the first time or to advance within the rating system.

  - The broad assumptions were:
    - The current voluntary child care rating system will become mandatory (this change will require a change to KRS 199.8943).
    - The current STAR rating system will move from a 4 STAR system to a 5 STAR system with current licensure essentially equating to STAR level 1.
    - While CCAP subsidies will continue to be available to eligible children, increases in subsidies will be targeted to STAR levels 2 through 5 with the greatest

resources being focused on moving from STAR level 2 to level 3. The greatest subsidy increases will be for infant and toddler care in an effort to encourage additional development and expertise in this area. Finding suitable infant and toddler care continues to be a challenge for many parents.

- No state funded preschool programs will receive CCAP subsidies unless they operate wrap-around services (full day service: half preschool/half day care).
- Only licensed Head Start day care facilities will be eligible for CCAP subsidies.

- Through the above approach to CCAP payment, access issues should be avoided and quality improvement encouraged.
- The model that follows was based on September 2013 CCAP payment data and Kentucky's current voluntary STAR rating system. For the month of September, payments for approximately 40,000 CCAP children were made. Of those, over half were in non-rated centers with 43 percent being in STAR rated centers. Just over 12,000 infants and toddlers were served (about 2400 infants and 9800 toddlers) along with over 15,000 preschool children and over 13,000 school age children.
  - <u>NOTES:</u>
    - As this application is being developed, the HHS Administration for Children and Families has proposed changes and new requirements for Child Care Development Fund that have not yet been finalized, and which will impose additional administrative burdens and costs on states. There are concerns by states that without additional federal allocations, this will require shifting funds from subsidies to administration.
    - Without data to support the outcomes of currently rated centers in the "NEW" rating structure, using current distribution for predicting future behavior may not prove realistic.
    - Department of Community Based Services has not yet achieved the realized cost containment necessary for meeting the current budget. The dollar amounts presented above will likely change over the course of the next months.
  - Year 1: $0
  - Year 2: 1,887,494

- Year 3: 8,817,534
- Year 4: $ 10,455,840

**Total funds**: $21,160,868

**Total funds requested for CHFS:** $36,993,840

**Kentucky Department of Education (KDE):**

Kentucky ALL STARS:

Personnel

- Regional Preschool Program Review Consultants (5)
    - For the implementation of the expansion of Kentucky's TQRIS.
    - Salary: $50,000 plus 41% fringe total: $70,500
    - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Central Office Preschool Program Review Consultant (1)
    - For the implementation of the expansion of Kentucky's TQRIS.
    - Salary: $55,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $77,550
        - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Kindergarten Entry Screen Analyst (1)
    - Salary: $85,000 plus 41% fringe
    - Total: $ $119,850
        - Full time position with 1950 annual hours
- Years 1-4 $390,000 for Personnel
- Years 1-4 Fringe $150,550

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**Total Personnel:** $1,560,000

**Total Fringe:** $602,200

Travel

- In-state travel for Preschool Program Review Consultants at $2,800 per person
- Years 1-4: $14,000

**Total Travel:** $56,000

Contractual

- $12,000 in Year 1 for Environmental Ratings Scale Training for all Preschool Program Review Consultants

**Total Contractual:** $12,000

Training Stipends

- $15,000 in Year 1 for Preschool Program Review Consultants' ongoing training and certification

**Total Training Stipends:** $15,000

KDE Other Costs

- Data sharing between CIITS and ECE TRIS specific for professional learning of preschool teachers:
  - Year 1: $50,000
  - Year 2-4: $8,000

**Total KDE Other:** $82,000

**Total Direct Costs for KDE:**

- Year 1: $639,550
- Year 2-4: $562,550

Total: $2,327,200

**Total Grant Funds for KDE:** $2,327,200

**Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC)**

EWDC Other

Early Childhood Data Systems

- Contract with KCEWS to expand on early childhood data warehouse and analysis. This includes: HANDS, First Steps, Child Care, and Head Start.
- Year 1: $134,160
- Year 2: $160,480
- Year 3: 144,000
- Year 4: $98,000

**Total EWDC Other:** $536,640

**EWDC Total for grant period:** $536,640

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**Total Grant Funds Requested:**

- Year 1: $3,422,972
- Year 2: $8,633,652
- Year 3:$15,641,041
- Year 4: $17,302,335

**Total: $45,000,000**

**Total Budget for State Plan including Grant funds and other state and federal resources:**

- Year 1 $102,296,072
- Year 2 $107,406,752
- Year 3 $114,414,141
- Year 4 $116,075,435
- Total $440,192,400

**Evidence for (A)(4)(b):**

| OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Budget Categories** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| 1. Personnel | 1,335,000 | 3,490,000 | 3,490,000 | 3,490,000 | **11,805,000** |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | 538,000 | 1,404,940 | 1,404,940 | 1,404,940 | **4,752,820** |
| 3. Travel | 149,000 | 311,400 | 311,400 | 311,400 | **1,083,200** |
| 4. Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 5. Supplies | 108,750 | 235,000 | 235,000 | 235,000 | **813,750** |
| 6. Contractual | 286,012 | 274,788 | 281,117 | 287,605 | **1,129,522** |
| 7. Training Stipends | 651,550 | 636,550 | 636,550 | 636,550 | **2,561,200** |
| 8. Other | 192,160 | 168,480 | 152,000 | 106,000 | **618,640** |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8) | **3,260,472** | **6,521,158** | **6,511,007** | **6,471,495** | **22,764,132** |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, & other partners | 62,500 | 2,012,494 | 9,030,034 | 10,730,840 | **21,835,868** |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| **13. Total Grant Funds Requested** (add lines 9-12) | **3,422,972** | **8,633,652** | **15,641,041** | **17,302,335** | **45,000,000** |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)** | **3,422,972** | **8,633,652** | **15,641,041** | **17,302,335** | **45,000,000** |

* If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

| OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency** (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) | | | | | |
| **Agency Name** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Governor's Office of Early Childhood** | 1,222,830 | 1,227,330 | 1,314,830 | 1,377,330 | **5,142,320** |
| **Cabinet for Health and Family Services** | 1,426,432 | 6,683,292 | 13,619,661 | 15,264,455 | **36,993,840** |
| **Kentucky Department of Education** | 639,550 | 562,550 | 562,550 | 562,550 | **2,327,200** |
| **Education and Workforce Development Cabinet** | 134,160 | 160,480 | 144,000 | 98,000 | **536,640** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **3,422,972** | **8,633,652** | **15,641,041** | **17,302,335** | **45,000,000** |

| OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project** (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) | | | | | |
| **Project** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Kentucky ALL STARS (TQRIS)** | 2,689,132 | 7,918,992 | 14,855,361 | 16,500,155 | **41,963,640** |
| **Strengthening Families** | 205,230 | 147,230 | 147,230 | 147,230 | **646,920** |
| **Toyota bornLEARNING Academy** | 125,950 | 188,450 | 275,950 | 338,450 | **928,800** |
| **Early Childhood Data Systems** | 302,660 | 278,980 | 262,500 | 216,500 | **1,060,640** |
| **Technical Assistance** | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | **400,000** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **3,422,972** | **8,633,652** | **15,641,041** | **17,302,335** | **45,000,000** |

| Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Budget Category** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| 1. Personnel | 258,000 | 258,000 | 258,000 | 258,000 | **1,032,000** |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | 105,780 | 105,780 | 105,780 | 105,780 | **423,120** |
| 3. Travel | 60,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | **66,000** |
| 4. Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 5. Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 6. Contractual | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 7. Training Stipends | 636,550 | 636,550 | 636,550 | 636,550 | **2,546,200** |
| 8. Other | | | | | **0** |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8) | **1,060,330** | **1,002,330** | **1,002,330** | **1,002,330** | **4,067,320** |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 62,500 | 125,000 | 212,500 | 275,000 | **675,000** |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | **400,000** |
| **13. Total Grant Funds Requested** (add lines 9-12) | **1,222,830** | **1,227,330** | **1,314,830** | **1,377,330** | **5,142,320** |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **15. Total Statewide Budget** (add lines 13-14) | **1,222,830** | **1,227,330** | **1,314,830** | **1,377,330** | **5,142,320** |
| *Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11. | | | | | |

| Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-2 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Project** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Kentucky ALL STARS (TQRIS)** | 855,100 | 855,100 | 855,100 | 855,100 | **3,420,400** |
| **Strengthening Families** | 205,230 | 147,230 | 147,230 | 147,230 | **646,920** |
| **Toyota bornLEARNING Academy** | 62,500 | 125,000 | 212,500 | 275,000 | **675,000** |
| **Early Childhood Data Systems** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Technical Assistance** | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 | **400,000** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **1,222,830** | **1,227,330** | **1,314,830** | **1,377,330** | **5,142,320** |

| Cabinet for Health and Family Services | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Budget Category** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| 1. Personnel | 687,000 | 2,842,000 | 2,842,000 | 2,842,000 | **9,213,000** |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | 281,670 | 1,148,610 | 1,148,610 | 1,148,610 | **3,727,500** |
| 3. Travel | 75,000 | 295,400 | 295,400 | 295,400 | **961,200** |
| 4. Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 5. Supplies | 108750 | 235,000 | 235,000 | 235,000 | **813,750** |
| 6. Contractual | 274,012 | 274,788 | 281,117 | 287,605 | **1,117,522** |
| 7. Training Stipends | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 8. Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8) | **1,426,432** | **4,795,798** | **4,802,127** | **4,808,615** | **15,832,972** |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 0 | 1,887,494 | 8,817,534 | 10,455,840 | **21,160,868** |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **13. Total Grant Funds Requested** (add lines 9-12) | **1,426,432** | **6,683,292** | **13,619,661** | **15,264,455** | **36,993,840** |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **15. Total Statewide Budget** (add lines 13-14) | **1,426,432** | **6,683,292** | **13,619,661** | **15,264,455** | **36,993,840** |

| Cabinet for Health and Family Services | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-2 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Project** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Kentucky ALL STARS (TQRIS)** | 1,362,982 | 6,619,842 | 13,556,211 | 15,201,005 | **36,740,040** |
| **Strengthening Families** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Toyota bornLEARNING Academy** | 63,450 | 63,450 | 63,450 | 63,450 | **253,800** |
| **Early Childhood Data Systems** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Technical Assistance** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **1,426,432** | **6,683,292** | **13,619,661** | **15,264,455** | **36,993,840** |

| Kentucky Department of Education | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Budget Category** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| 1. Personnel | 390,000 | 390,000 | 390,000 | 390,000 | **1,560,000** |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | 150,550 | 150,550 | 150,550 | 150,550 | **602,200** |
| 3. Travel | 14,000 | 14,000 | 14,000 | 14,000 | **56,000** |
| 4. Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 5. Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 6. Contractual | 12,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **12,000** |
| 7. Training Stipends | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **15,000** |
| 8. Other | 58,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 | **82,000** |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8) | **639,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **2,327,200** |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **13. Total Grant Funds Requested** (add lines 9-12) | **639,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **2,327,200** |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **15. Total Statewide Budget** (add lines 13-14) | **639,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **2,327,200** |

| Kentucky Department of Education | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-2 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Project** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Kentucky ALL STARS (TQRIS)** | 471,050 | 444,050 | 444,050 | 444,050 | **1,803,200** |
| **Strengthening Families** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Toyota bornLEARNING Academy** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Early Childhood Data Systems** | 168,500 | 118,500 | 118,500 | 118,500 | **524,000** |
| **Technical Assistance** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **639,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **562,550** | **2,327,200** |

| Education and Workforce Development Cabinet | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Budget Category** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| 1. Personnel | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 3. Travel | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 4. Equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 5. Supplies | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 6. Contractual | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 7. Training Stipends | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 8. Other | 134,160 | 160,480 | 144,000 | 98,000 | **536,640** |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8) | 134,160 | 160,480 | 144,000 | 98,000 | **536,640** |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **13. Total Grant Funds Requested** (add lines 9-12) | **134,160** | **160,480** | **144,000** | **98,000** | **536,640** |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **15. Total Statewide Budget** (add lines 13-14) | **134,160** | **160,480** | **144,000** | **98,000** | **536,640** |

| Education and Workforce Development Cabinet | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-2 (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))** | | | | | |
| **Project** | **Grant Year 1 (a)** | **Grant Year 2 (b)** | **Grant Year 3 (c)** | **Grant Year 4 (d)** | **Total (e)** |
| **Kentucky ALL STARS (TQRIS)** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Strengthening Families** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Toyota bornLEARNING Academy** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Early Childhood Data Systems** | 134,160 | 160,480 | 144,000 | 98,000 | **536,640** |
| **Technical Assistance** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **Total Statewide Budget** | **134,160** | **160,480** | **144,000** | **98,000** | **536,640** |